

# Key to Mayan Civilization

THRU-THE-LENS.

## GUIDE TO THE RUINS OF CHICHEN ITZA

by JOSE DIAZ-BOLIO *Author of*  
*"THE FEATHERED SERPENT- axis of cultures"*



*Only one containing the*  
**THEORY OF MAYAN ART**



## CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

"You are a master in Mayan science. You remind me of Elie Faure describing the temples of Asia. In this science, you are what Flammarion was to Astronomy and Pasteur to Chemistry and Biology". Eduardo Avilés Ramírez, noted Latin-American critique.

"The theory held by Díaz-Bolio in his book "LA SERPIENTE EMPLUMADA, eje de culturas" — (The Feathered Serpent-axis of cultures) is of interest to all Americanists, for it upsets the pseudo-classic theories on Mayan and Meso-American civilizations. Rich in substance, this anthropological work is full of personal concepts, sometimes audacious and even revolutionary". Germaine Stiénon, Doctor in Philosophy. (Belgium).

"The intellectual world owes you a debt of gratitude for documenting so splendidly one of the most astonishing achievements of mankind in pure expression of his unique mental attributes. The Mayans exhibited a high level of intellectual achievement with their extraordinarily elaborate snake cult. Your identification of *Crotalus durissus durissus* as the pattern for Mayan art and symbolism is epochal. Your discovery is great!" Dr. Hobart M. Smith, President of the Department of Biology, University of Colorado. (Dr. Smith is one of the foremost herpetologists in the world and the first authority on snakes of Mexico).

"I agree with your interpretations of the rattlesnake for all Mayan civilization and its derivatives (Huastec, Toltec and others). Ing. Alberto Escalona Ramos, author of "Cronología y Astronomía Maya-Meshica" — (Maya-Meshica Cronology and Astronomy).

"I think that your study on *Crotalus durissus durissus*, contained in your book "La Serpiente Emplumada, eje de culturas", is a solid and indestructible argument". Dr. Jesús Núñez Chinchilla, Director of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia de Honduras, C. A. — (National Institute of Anthropology and History of Honduras, Central America).

"I have studied Spanish in order to understand your book "La Serpiente Emplumada, eje de culturas", and I am very grateful to you on account of it. It is a work of profound erudition, exactly what I had searched for during so long a time and in vain". Dr. Edmund Dondelinger, Anthropologist and Egyptologist. (Koblenz, West Germany).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### ANTHROPOLOGICAL TITLES

José Díaz-Bolio is a well known poet in Yucatan. He has published ten books of poems in verse and in prose, some of them in Mayan style. He is the author of a "TEORÍA SOBRE LO BELLO" — (Theory on Beauty) and has published many essays on Aesthetics. As a journalist he has written thousands of articles, many of which are



30.00

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**MAYAN AREA**



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## **INSTRUCTIVE GUIDE TO THE RUINS OF CHICHEN ITZA....**

In 1942 I discovered that the rattle of the rattlesnake was the main religious symbol of the Mayans. They thought and still think that the rattler adds one rattle to its tail per year. They believe they can know the age of any individual of this species by counting the segments in its tail. This is the oldest idea I have been able to trace in the American Continent. Mayans thought that the *Crotalus* or rattlesnake had the ability of counting time. They regarded it as a solar snake.

I discovered that the Feathered Serpent, which is the main symbol of Meso—American civilizations, can only be and is always a rattlesnake; for it is a chronological symbol. Mayans, Toltecs, Aztecs, and other people thought that such a viper was an incarnation of the Sun; furthermore, they represented it coming out of the mouth of a rattler, as I have shown in the particular case of the so—called "Aztec Calendar Stone". This we demonstrate in the third edition of our book in Spanish "LA SER—PIENTE EMPLUMADA, eje de culturas", page 342.

The rattlestring was or is, in fact, the sole "accumulator" of time on Earth. According to their believe, it was the only thing in which the Mayans could see the progression of time, for there are some rattlesnakes that add just ONE rattle to their tail per year. In no other object can the accumulation of Time be seen from outside. The rattle means time, chronology, calendar.

But it also means New Life. Every time the rattler sheds its old skin; every time it regenerates and becomes young again, it adds one more segment to its rattlestring. So, if we find a rattler with 13 rattles, we know, with complete certainty, that it has had 13 regenerations; that is, that he has overcome sickness, old age and decay that number of times.

The rattle of the viper is the most perfect symbol of New Life in all the world, not only for the rattlesnake, but for Nature also. Just as the viper, Nature gets old once every year, in the dry season. It sickens and decays, just as the serpent. But during the rainy season it is regenerated, "born again" as Mayans would say it (*caput zihil*). Therefore and according to Nature, the Mayan year begun in the solstice of summer, which brings the heaviest rainfall from Yucatan to Bombay, India. When it rains, the rattlesnakes appear on the field. Immediately, Nature regenerates. Even more, rattlesnakes are born during the days near to the solstice of summer, that is, July and August. The rattlesnake is not only a chronological symbol, but it is also associated with rain. Due to this fact we find in the rain—god's mask rattlesnake features. Yet, it is above all a solar symbol. As primitive people do, Mayans believed that the virtue of the rattle was in its form and that by drawing it they would appropriate its virtue for themselves—that is, its "effects". The chronologist would be a better time—keeper and people would not get old rapidly. Besides, the rattle is an instrument or model for symmetry and consequently of art. This explains why the rattle of the rattlesnake



was placed everywhere, in ceramics, architecture, painting and tattoos. The secret of Life and regeneration was in it. A sign or symbol was not an abstract idea, but something real, as it was also for the Egyptians.

I have worked on the subject during 31 years and my findings are presented in the above quoted book. I have also found that Mayan art is based on the *Crotalus Durissus* Trabcan of Yucatanian rattlesnake, as are also Toltec and Aztec arts, as well as Olmec. This is a fact that reverses many ideas, mainly the one that attributes a Toltec origin to Mayan civilization. Contrarily, Toltec art was based on the Yucatanian rattlesnake pattern. Not a single one of the Feathered Serpent's attributes or elements are of the Toltec high—plateau habitat. We find them all in the Yucatanian or Mayan Area, which are the same.

Some years ago, in 1966, I found that Mayan geometry was also based on the Yucatanian rattlesnake and that this pattern was also used by other civilizations of Meso—America. This means that the source of civilization was in Yucatan. The "Aztec Calendar Stone" is made exactly in accordance with the geometry of the Yucatanian rattlesnake pattern. Even more, architecture was developed after the square in the skin—pattern of that viper. This we study in an appendix to our book, entitled "LA GEOMETRIA DE LOS MAYAS Y EL MAYARTE CROTALICO". What may be called the mathematical pattern of Nature was in Yucatan and Central America hundreds, perhaps millions of years before any archaeological or historical civilization. The Yucatanian rattlesnake was the first Pythagoras, a very long time before that great Greek philosopher and mathematician existed.

It is impossible to give in this Guide to the Ruins to Chichen Itza an abstract of our findings. We shall only give some main ideas about Mayan geometry, for this will open the necessary comprehension to the ever—present rattlesnake motif.

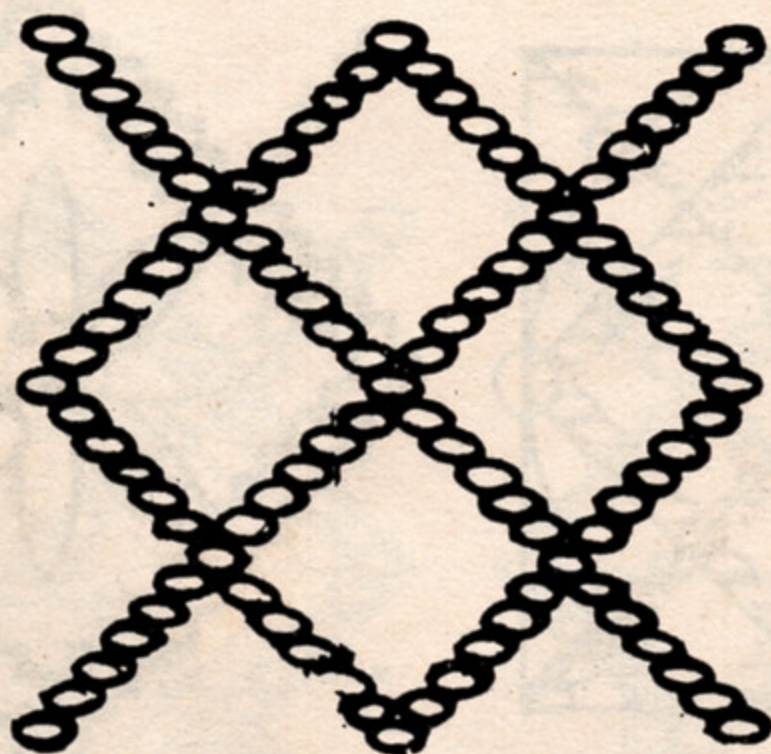


*Mayan priest with snake in front of him. The serpentine volute of speech comes out of his mouth. With his right hand the priest makes the sign of "Pop" meaning calendar, chronological science.*





**Crotalus durissus durissus**, with the geometrical pattern in the skin design. Its rattles symbolize time—count and New Life. They are also a model of symmetry and curvilinear art. Conventionally, the rattlestring is the only accumulator of time. It is the only object where periods of time may be registered, corresponding to skin—shedding periods. The 4 sides of the rhomboids or squares represent the number 4, which is an attribute of the Sun. (Photo—courtesy of Dr. Laurence M. Klauber, Author of "Rattlesnakes", San Diego, Cal., 1956).



The Yucatanian Rattlesnake's Four—Vertex "Canamayté", which in Mayan means "Square of the Serpent", The Canamayté is a pattern of symmetry and a diagram of proportions. It is exactly the same as the Pythagorean diagram of proportions.



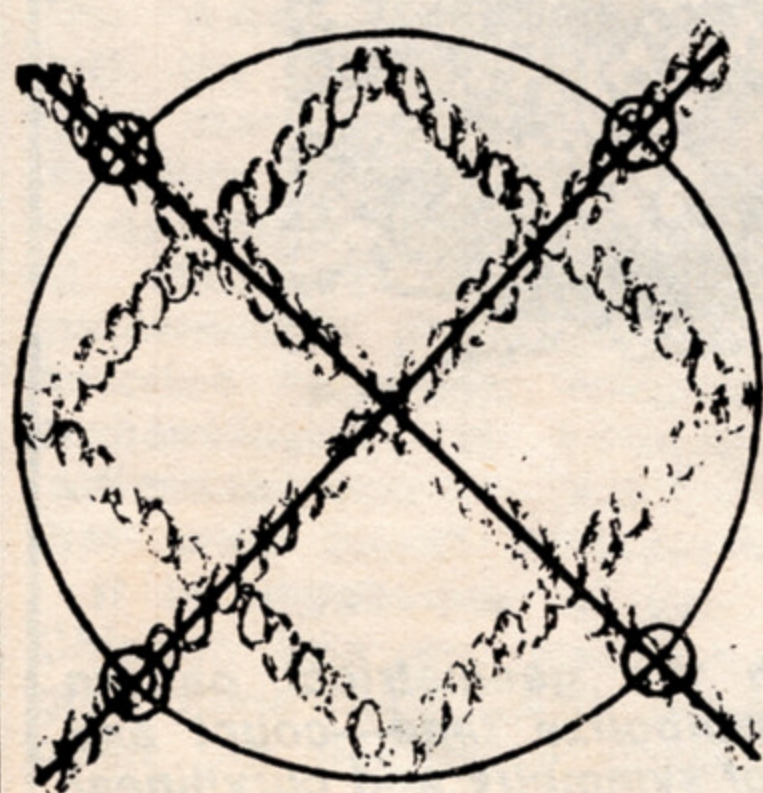
10. Without the Four—Vertex “Canamayté” in the skin pattern of the Yucatanian and Central American rattlesnake, Mayan, Toltec, Aztec and other high civilizations of the Americas would not have existed. The “Canamayté” was the mathematical certainty amidst chaos.

2. From this diagram develop or evolve the geometrical forms of Mayan, Toltec, Aztec and Peruvian arts.

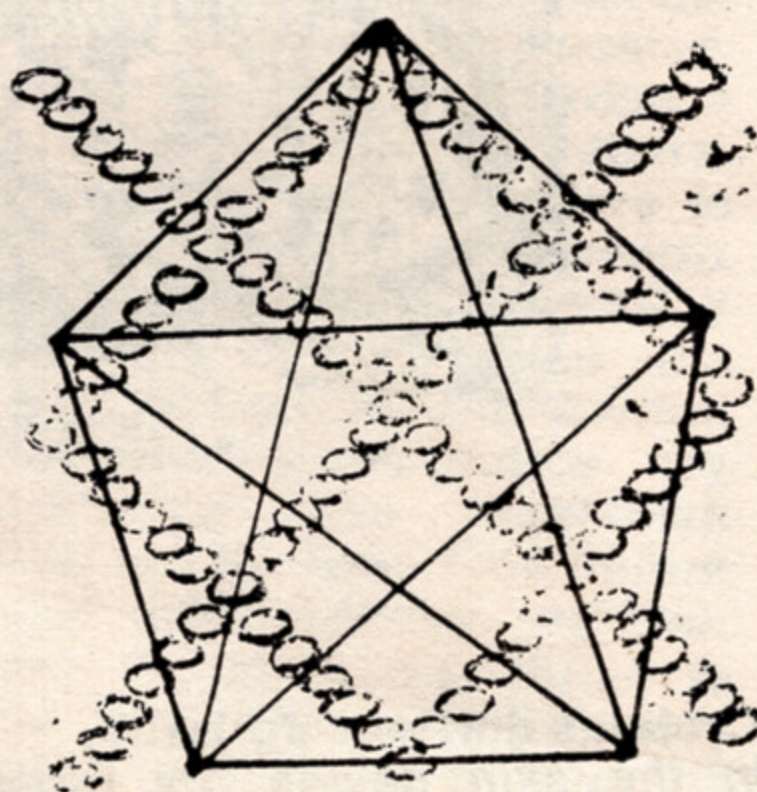
3. It is a diagram of proportions for the human body, trees, architecture, arts, and even for fixing the cardinal points.

4. It motivated the conception of heaven in the form of a square.

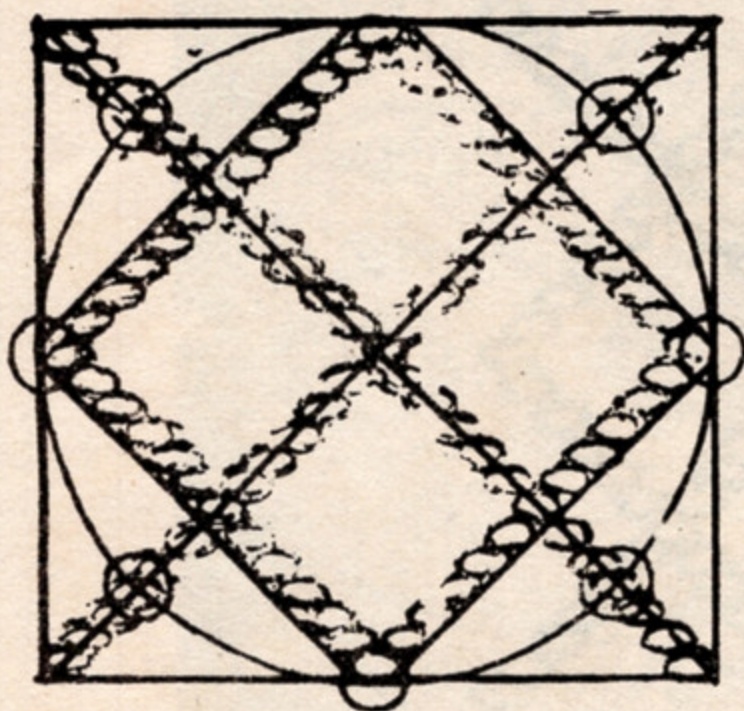
5. It has run down to our time: we find the Canamayté in the embroidered stems of Mayan dresses.



*Hand—drawn circle  
without a compass.*



*The Pentagon.*

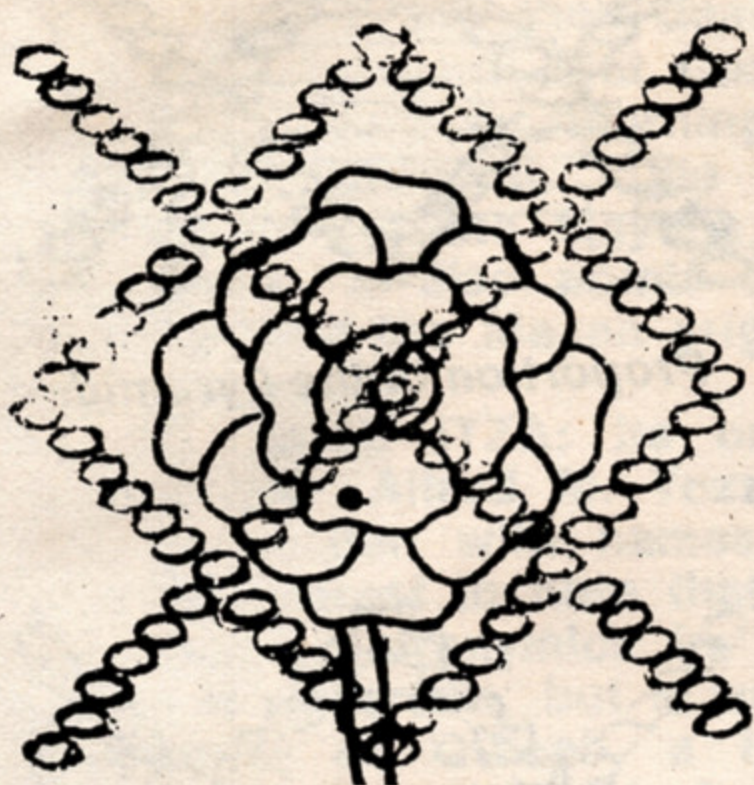


*The Moon's movements.*

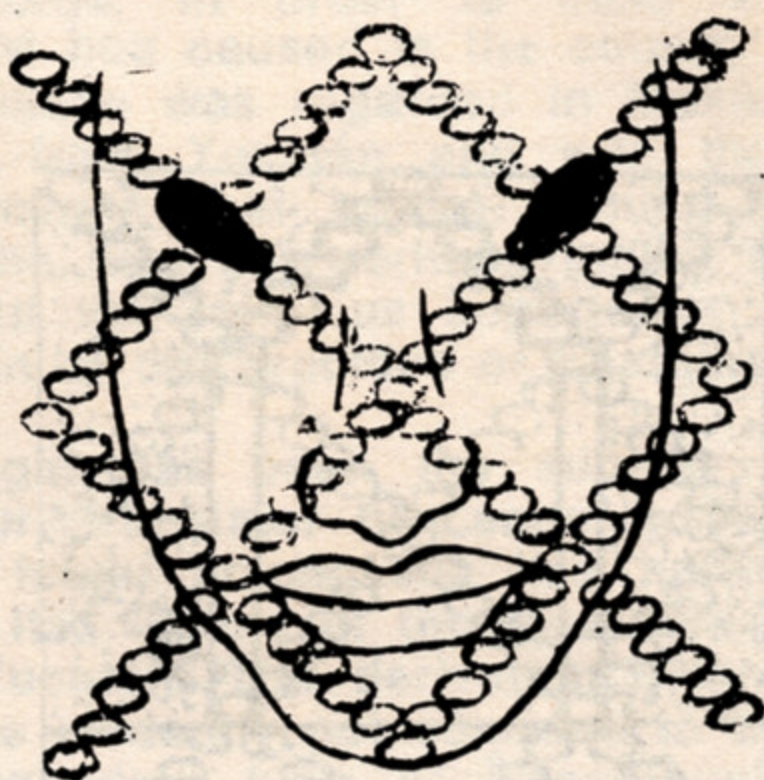


*A cosmogonic square at Uxmal.*

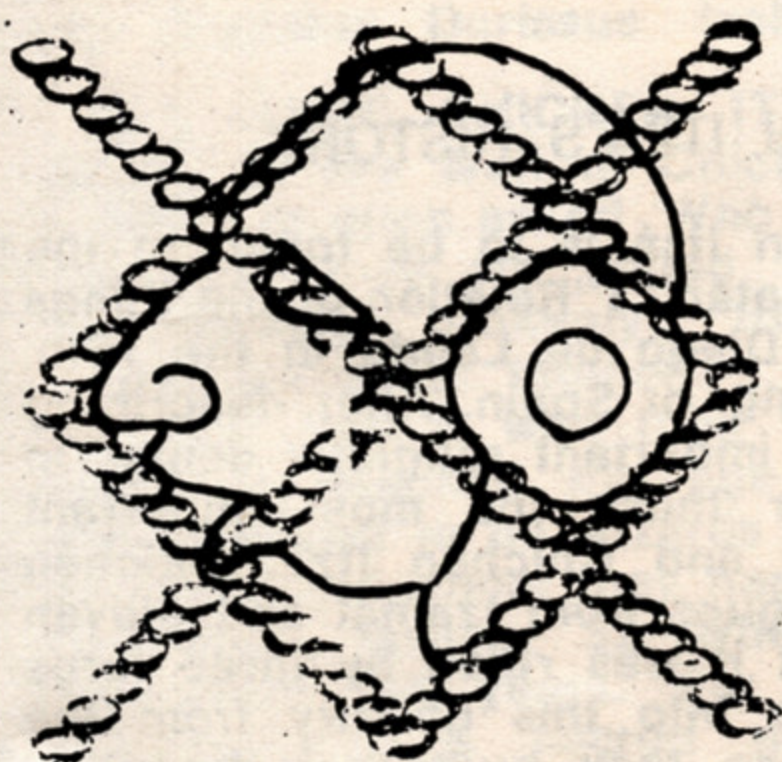




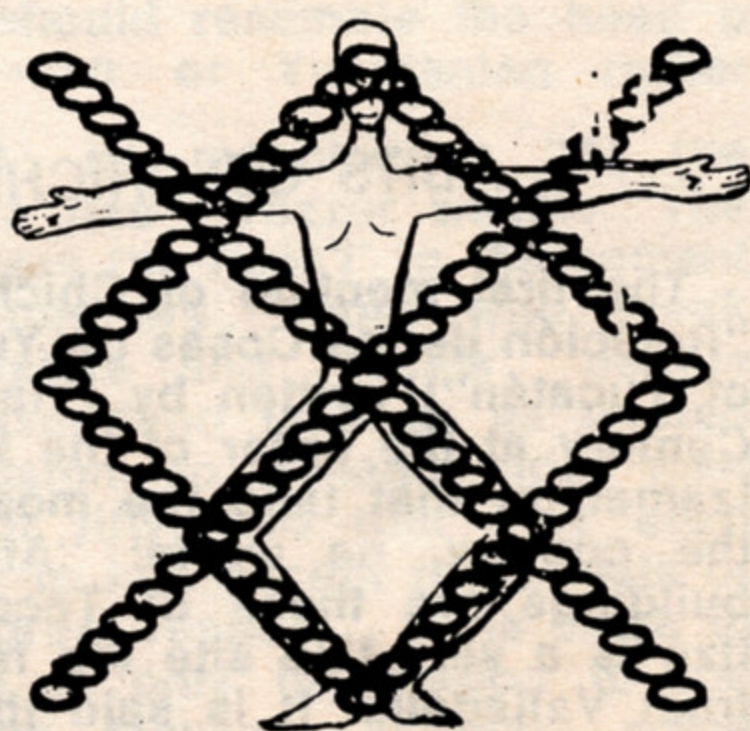
**Proportion of a flower. .**



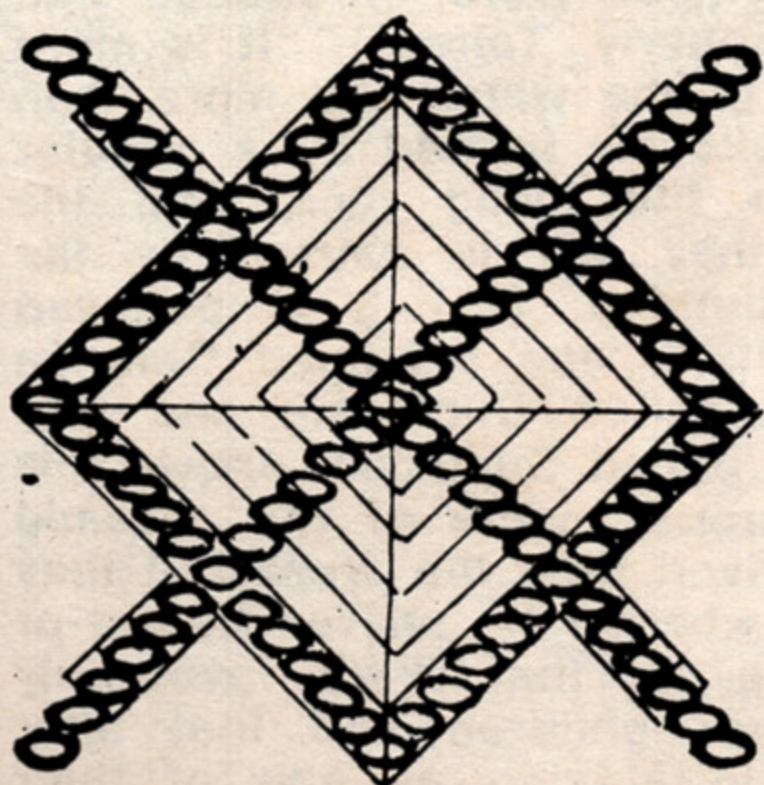
**The human face**



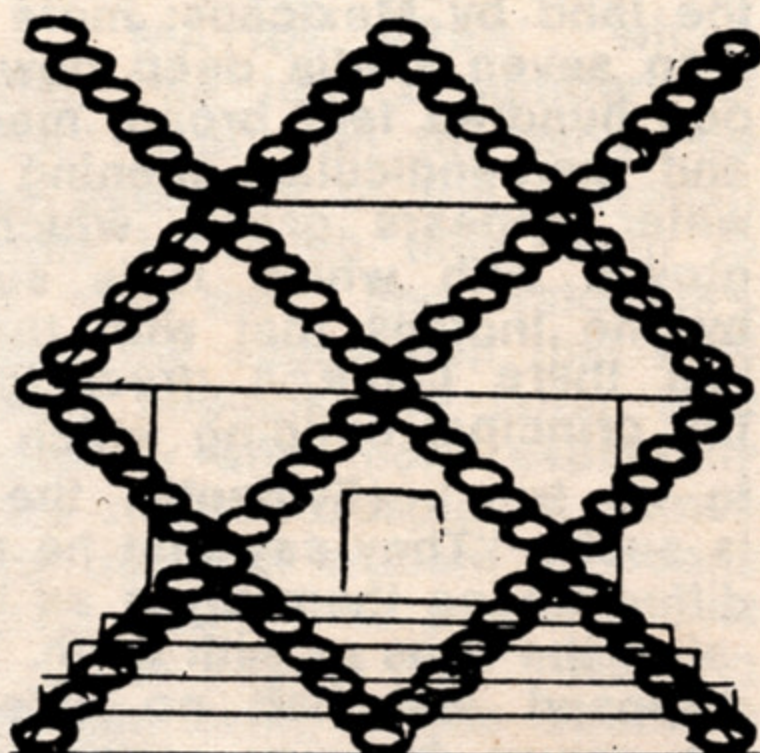
**The Maya profile.**



**The human body.**

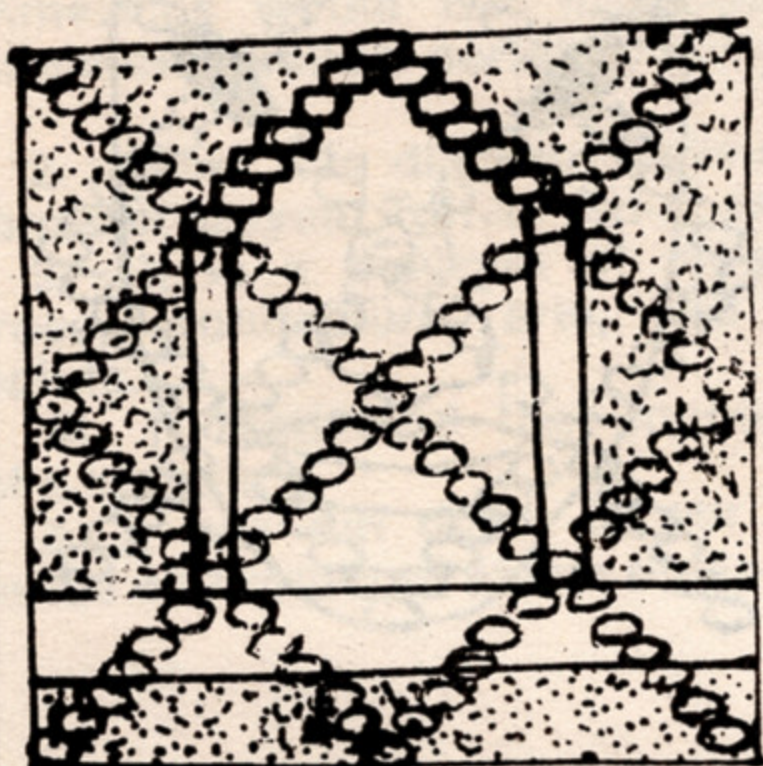


**A pyramid's plan.**

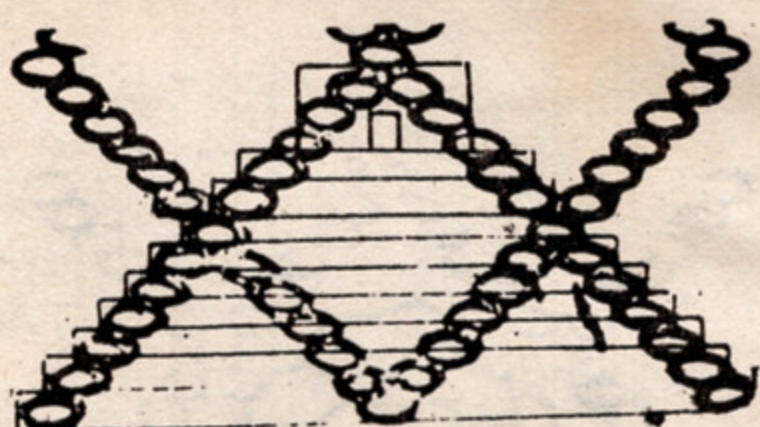


**The thatched—roof hut—house.**

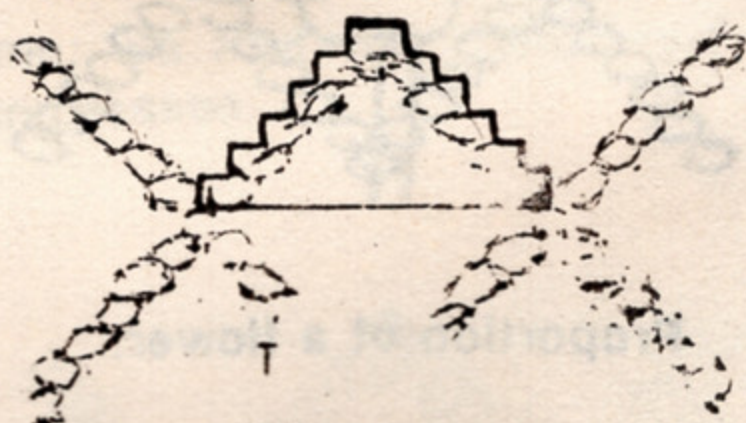




*Origin and proportion  
of the Mayan vault.*



*Proportion of the Pyramid.*



*The same.*

### BITS OF CHICHEN ITZA'S HISTORY.

The first mention of Chichén Itzá is to be found in the "Relación de las Cosas de Yucatán" ("Relation of the things of Yucatán") written by Friar Diego de Landa in the 16th. Century at the order of the King of Spain. After describing Izamal, at that time the most important religious center in the country, he wrote: "After these the most important buildings are those of Tecoh and Chichén Itzá. Chichén Itzá is a very fine site ten leagues from Izamal and eleven from Valladolid. It is said that it was ruled by three lords who were brothers, who came into this country from the West, who were devote and so they built their beautiful temples and their wives lived very chastely. And one of them died or went away, upon which the other two acted unjustly and indecently, and for this they were put to death. We will describe later the decoration of the principal building and will tell about the well into which they threw living men in sacrifice as well as other beautiful things". (Mayans said that human sacrifices were introduced into the land by Mexicans; more properly, Toltecs). "It is more than seven stadia deep down to the water and more than one hundred feet broad, marvellously formed by a circular and perpendicular opening in the living rock, and the water appears green, which they say is caused by the groves with which it is surrounded. (....) It is believed by the Indians that with the Itzas who occupied Chichén Itzá there came a great lord called Cuculcán, and that the principal building which is called Cuculcan, shows this to be true". (Evidently, the proper name of the pyramid is such). "They say that he arrived from the West, but they differ among themselves as to whether he arrived before or after the Itzas or with them. They say that he was favourably disposed and had no wife nor children and that after his return he was regarded in Mexico as one of their gods and was called Quetzalcouatl; and they also considered him a god in Yucatan on account of his being a just stateman; and this is seen in the order which he imposed in Yucatán







This cannot be supported for the style of late Chichén Itzá is very similar to that of Tula, Hidalgo, which is in the Toltec area. Much confusion derives from the fact that ancient Mexicans conquered a large part of what is now the Republic of Mexico, which was called in Spanish colonial times "New Spain". The name "Mexico" is a new one among other civilizations in Meso—America. Mayans, Toltecs, Totonacs, Huastecs and other people not only were not Mexicans, but even considered these as their natural enemies.

In his notes to the "Relación", Tozzer writes: "The many references to Chichén Itzá in the Books of Chilam cannot always be reconciled. According to the Tizimin, Chichén was discovered in a Katun 8 Ahau (617—922 A.D.). The Chumayel, which is concerned with the Itzas more than with any other people, gives the 'discovery' as having taken place in a Katun 6 Ahau (692—711) and in a Katun 4 Ahau (711—731)". It can be said that Chichén Itzá was discovered at about 691—790 A.D. It was abandoned by the Itzas, who went to live at Chakanputún (now Champotón). Pure Mayan Chichén Itzá style corresponds to that period before they left their city. The abandonment might have occurred from 700 to 900. Alfred M. Tozzer writes that "It should be noted that 609—889 is also the date given usually as the time of the general abandonment of the sites of the (so—called) Great Empire to the South". The Chilam of Chumayel book says that the land of Chakanputún was seized by the Itzá around 925—945. The incoherence of this dates shows the impossibility to make the history of Chichén Itzá. The Chilam Balam of Chumayel puts this way the abandonment of Chakanputún. "This was always the Katún when the Itzá went beneath the trees, beneath the bushes, beneath the vines, to their misfortune". "The 'thirteen folds' or katuns are mentioned in the Maní and in the Tizimín. 'Thirteen score years Chakanputún was ruled by the Itzá men'. "This and a previous statement that the Itzá were 'Holy men' with houses at Chakanputún are the first mention of the Itzas as a people". It appears clear, then, that the Itzá abandoned their city and returned afterwards to rebuild it. Considering the style of Old Chichén, it is clear that the city was founded by Mayans. Toltecs arrived later.

In the past century, Yucatan separated several times from Mexico. This caused its territorial fragmentation by the Federal Government. Petén was passed to Guatemala, a State was formed with the Campeche district, Belice was given to England and in 1902 the Territorio de Quintana Roo was formed, severing it from Yucatan. Thus the Maya State was reduced to less than its 7th original size.

Indeed, little is known about Chichén Itzá.

**A LEGEND:** There is one relating the ruin of Chichén by Hunac—Cel, King of Mayapan. Canek, King of Chichén Itzá, fell in love with Sac—Nicté, the beautiful princess of Uxmal whose name meant "White Flower". Sac—Nicté was betrothed to Ulil, King of Uxmal. The marriage was taking place at Mayapán when Canek appeared, followed by his best warriors. He cried aloud the battle cry: "Itzalán! Itzalán!" He advanced to the altar, seized Nicté—Ha and went away with her, his warriors holding back those of Mayapán who tried to reach Canek and free Sac—Nicté. Then, Mayapán and Chichén Itzá marched against the latter, defeating and punishing Canek.



Now, about 1845, when there was in Yucatán the bloody "War of Castes" or classes, by which the Mayans tried to recover their ancestors' land, exterminating all the whites and mestizos, there were imprisoned in the hacienda or farm of Chichén Itzá a group of whites. It was a savage war. Mayans threw children up into the air and received them with their bayonets. They also held them by the feet and smashed their heads against the walls. Men were sacrificed in the bull—fight manner. Women were tortured in terrible ways and made captive so that they should be used as concubines or slaves.

When the Adelantado don Francisco de Montejo tried to conquer the Mayans for the first time in 1527, he camped with his small army at Chichén Itzá. He thought he had made a good friendship with the Mayans. But then one day the Spaniards noticed strange movements of warriors, so they decided to flee. To do this, one night they tied a bell to a dog's tail and put some food near the hungry animal, but not so near that he could reach it. Thus the dog rang the bell continuously in his effort to reach the food. With this strategy the Mayans thought Montejo was camping there quietly with his conquistadores, when in reality he was running away to reach the shore and embark again.

There is at Chichén Itzá also a track of temperamental archaeology. Visitors will see a big hole in the "Great Palace". It was made by French archaeologist Le Plongeon, who dynamited it thinking he would find there a treasure. What came out was the first building upon which was built the second. Le Plongeon discovered at Chichén the famous statue called absurdly by him "Chac Mool".

## MAYA

In Diego de Cogolludo's "History of Yucatán", written in the 17th Century, the Author states that the real name of the country is Maya, and that its language is Mayatán, a word meaning "Speech of Maya". According to this data, Maya is the Yucatán Peninsula where Maya language was found and still exists. Dialects begin there where Yucatán or Maya ends. The Maya or Yucatan Peninsula has a perfect unity that can be summarized as one country or land, one race, one language and one civilization. Thus, Yucatan history cannot be fragmented as it was the land. In order to understand Mayan civilization we have to understand Yucatan or Maya as a whole.

As we have stated, Mayan art was based on the Yucatanian rattlesnake. It reached a higher evolution due, not only to the natural genius of the race, but perhaps because of the presence of that viper all over the land. In the Americas, indigenous arts show a finer evolution while they are more in accordance with the rattlesnake pattern, or, more strictly, with the Central American *Durissus* rattler. This evolution of art may be appreciated at Uxmal, Na—Chan—Caan (Palenque), Tikal, Quiriguá, Yaxchilán and other ancient Yucatanian cities. Toltec art reaches, at Chichén Itzá, a quality not obtained at Teotihuacán.



## TOLTEC INFLUENCE

It is evident at Chichén Itzá. Yet, some books speak of "Mexican" influence there. This was impossible, since Mexicans did not exist as a nation or people when Toltec influence reached Yucatán. Still more, Aztecs or Mexicans were the natural enemies of both Toltecs and Mayans. Toltec influence was not an original feature but a reflux of Mayan cultural traits that reached the Toltec high plateau. Not a single one of the Feathered Serpent attributes—viper, bird, snails—, neither other as the jaguar or the Cieba sacred tree are of the Toltec habitat. The prevailing Quetzalcoatl—snake and bird are Central—American; that is, the *Crotalus Durissus* and the Quetzalli—Trogon—*Resplendens*. This means that the Cuculcán—Quetzalcoatl myth was originated in Maya. It was something which started here, travelled abroad and returned afterwards as a reflux. We find the rattlesnake symbol all over the Mayan area where Toltec influence did not reach. We have it at Labná and at Uxmal. Perhaps it started here in the style depicting the body of the snake all covered with Quetzalli plumes, as it appears in the Western side of the first Uxmal quadrangle. No other representation of the Feathered Serpent is as gorgeous and large as that one. From Uxmal perhaps it passed to Chichén Itzá and from here to the Toltec area. It is strange thing that a symbol with all its attributes originated in MAYA should not be of this origin, but Toltec. The Uxmal Feathered Serpent stands as the most obvious pattern of all Feathered Serpents.

This slight historical data cannot end without mentioning the late Fernando Barbachano Peón. He was the creator of tourism in Yucatan and did all he could, beyond excellence, to provide beautiful hotels that combine Spanish and Mayan feelings. He even made a picturesque Decauville railway so that visitors could travel to "Old Chichén". He sponsored books on Mayan civilization and kept his enthusiasm alive even when he was lying sick in his last days.

We have to mention also the dragging of the Well of Sacrifices by the American Consul Edward Thompson, done on his own account when he was the owner of all Chichén Itzá, which he bought together with the hacienda, this and the ruins—all for a small price. In those days there was no interest in Mexico for archaeology and there were neither no laws prohibiting explorations and exportations of archaeological objects. The Minister of Education, Justo Sierra Méndez, visited Chichén Itzá en 1905 and saw the dredge—machine with which Thompson was dredging the famous Well. Sierra Méndez thought nothing bad about it. Objects found there were exported secretly to the United States and there they formed rich collections in the Peabody Museum.

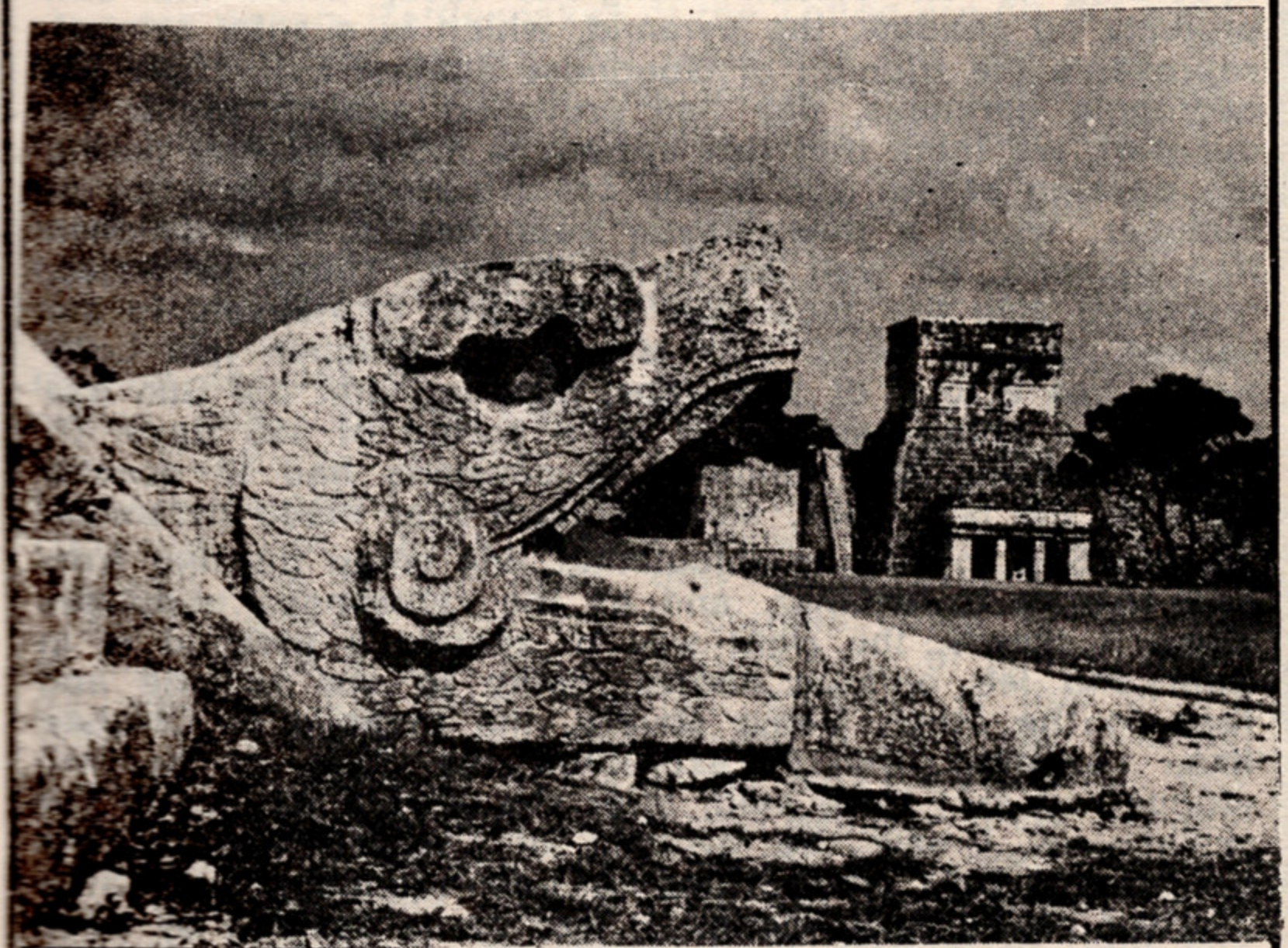
## CHICHEN ITZA BUILDINGS

**THE LOFTY HOUSE OF CUCULCAN.**— In Mayan language a construction like this is called "high" or lofty house. There is no known word for pyramid. This lofty house was a solar temple. The Sun was the giver (and still is) of fire and rain, for a major solar arc causes more evaporation, condensation and precipitation; that is, more rain.





**The Lofty House of Cuculcán, major Chichén Itzá Pyramid.**



**One of the Feathered Serpents of the Lofty House. The spiral at the end of the mouth symbolizes the Sun's movement. The eyebrow is a stylized rattle and represents the sinuos movement of the Sun when it passes from one solstice to the other. At the end, the Temple of the Rattlesnakes and the Tigers, and the Chapel of Cuculcán.**



At "Old Chichén" I discovered, the year 1942, the main symbol of Mayan religious art, already described in this booklet. I discovered it in one of the lintels of the so-called "Group of the 4 Lintels". Until that time, there was absolutely no idea about the fact that Mayan art was based on the rattlesnake and that the rattles of the viper meant solar count, chronology and calendar. Nobody had even suspected that the Feathered Serpent had to be, always, a rattlesnake. There existed no idea on the subject, no book, no writing. Mayans, as well as Aztecs or Peruvians, never betrayed the inner meaning of their religious totem, which was a taboo. So I had to build, alone and with no help whatsoever, all the subject. I am greatly indebted to that lintel, for the fact it allowed me to discover the inmost nature, the central idea of Mayan civilization.

**RELIGIOUS MEANING OF THE PYRAMID.**— The name of the pyramid possibly comes from "Pyrós", meaning fire in Greek. Flames have a pyramidal form. Thus, the pyramid is connected with the Sun and fire. The first beam of light at dawn forms a pyramid in the sky. Byzantine images appear praying holding together their hands in a pyramidal form. In the museum of Merida, Yucatán, may be seen a Mayan image depicting a priest in that same attitude: he seems to be praying. When the Sun is above at the center of Heaven, the pyramid projects no shadow. Charles DuPuis, French philosopher, in his great study on the Origin of All Religions, says that according to an Oriental religious idea, when the Sun projects no shadow, the pyramid, which is a solar symbol, represents the triumph of Goodness against Evil. Light has overcome darkness, day has prevailed against night. On our part, we think that this symbol is more realistic during the passing of the Sun in the Zenith during the Solstice of Summer, when a new Mayan year begins. The Chichén Itzá pyramid, as well as other Mayan, Toltec or Aztec, represent also the ascension of the Sun to Heaven, to the central point or zenith. This is why the Chichén Itzá Lofty House has a total of 365 steps, meaning that the Sun has climbed a round—year, that is, a period of 365 days. Of course, priests and religious processions had to ascend also; as the Sun does, and therefore they made pyramids. As the Sun makes an undulating line when passing from one solstice to another, and as the rattlesnake undulates when it crawls, the right way to ascend a pyramid is in right and left oblique angles, going to one side and then to the other. Being square, the pyramid of Chichén Itzá, as many other, expresses the form of heaven, conceived, as I have said, after the square pattern of the rattlesnake. I saw the pyramid of Chichén Itzá for the first time in 1924, when it had not been reconstructed. Cattle climbed on its loose stones. It was partly covered by trees and grass. Many paraments were fallen. The reconstructed parts may be compared with the other 2 not rebuilt. Reconstruction was undertaken by archaeologists of the Mexican Federal Government. The Lofty House is upon a huge platform on which rest also other buildings such as the "Ball Court", the Temple of the Sun or "Warriors" and the "One Thousand Columns".

**BASE:** It measures 55.5 meters each side.

**ALTITUDE:** 26 meters (of the pyramid properly), plus 6 of the temple above. Total: 30 Meters. This number



perhaps was sacred, as it is proximate to 29, which is the number of days of a lunar month.

**ORIENTATION:** It is in relation with the passing of the Sun in the zenith. The main facade looks to the North. The stairways have an inclination not less than 45°.

**PERSPECTIVE:** In the Lofty House of Cuculcán are applied the rules of perspective, which the Mayans seemed to know. The 9 platforms or "bodies" of the pyramid become higher gradually in the upper parts thus producing a sense of greater loftiness. The builders of the Sun pyramid at Teotihuacán did not apply those rules and thence that pyramid does not appear as high as it should.

**STAGES:** The pyramid has 9 stages or scaffolds. 9 is the number of Heaven and is in relation to the 9 directions of the Canamayté—Four—Vertex of the Mayan rattlesnake, considering the center also as a direction. There was the idea of 9—Heaven and 9—Blessed—Soul. Also of 9—House, which was another name for Heaven: Na—Bolón.

**ANGLES:** The angles of the stages are softly round

**THE TALUS:** This feature of Mayan and Toltec art was copied surely from the Mayan rattlesnake that coils in concentric—slopes when it lies down to rest. Its body is not cylindrical but conical—pyramidal. Consequently, when it coils it forms concentric stages with slopes; that is, a pyramid with talusses. There are many concepts that should be changed in the archaeology of Yucatán and México (we say México and Yucatán, because they are, ethnologically, and archaeologically, two different countries, even if Yucatán is a political part of Mexico). The talus was not originated in the Toltec area. Books holding this view are wrong. Rattlesnakes of the Toltec are do not have the mathematical pattern that originates the talus, nor the typical pyramidal form of the Mayan rattlesnake's body, from which the talus also results. Now, the sun does not ascend in a vertical but in an inclined angle or line. This is represented by the inclined line, slope or talus of the rattlesnake and the pyramid. In this case, the talus is decorated with protruding rectangles. There are 52 rectangles. We find this same idea in the skirts of ancient and modern Mayans of Yucatán. In the skirts they stand for rattles and the parament—rectangles mean the same idea. Contrarily to what is said in books, the talus is found in the oldest parts of Maya, particularly at Dzibichaltun, Uaxactún and Labná, where some cornices have the inclined line of the talus, only in a reverse position.

**STAIRWAYS.**— There are 4, corresponding to the idea of the Sun as lord of the 4 cardinal ways or points, which he presides. The most important stairway is that of the North, for it leads to the main facade of the upper building. Each one has 91 steps:  $91 \times 4 = 364$ , plus the platform's floor above: 365, number that was sacred because it corresponds to the year, which was "part" of the Sun—god. We have said that the right way of climbing the pyramid is in oblique—undulating—serpentine form, turning to right and left and left to right. We hold that the steps in that and other pyramids and temples were made so high as to indicate the undulant way of climbing. Those stairways were not made to be climbed straight—upwards. When going down, the undulant way avoids giddiness.

**THE HOUSE ON TOP.**— It has 4 (again number 4) rooms or chambers. As we have already said, this number is an attribute of the Sun and of the rattlesnake that has it in more than one way in its body. 4 corresponds to the 4 cardinal points and is also obtained from the "quadrature"



of Sun and Moon; that is, from their square—like position. It is also obtained from the Nadir—Zenith—horizon—line position. (See "La Serpiente Emplumada, eje de culturas", page 332). As we also have stated, in Mayan language Can means serpent and also number 4. When we say Tzab—can (rattlesnake) we also say Serpent—4. The house or temple upon the pyramid has a sanctuary and a gallery. In the porch there are 2 columns in the Chichén Itzá style: the shafts of the columns are plumed serpents and the volant capitel is the tale with its rattles. This type of plumed—serpent column is beautiful and gracious, besides being magnificent. There it is also in the Temple of the Rattlesnakes and the Tigers and in other places.

**NEW FIRE CEREMONY.**— The Lofty House was the temple where Cuculcán and his priests made the New Fire ritual, which was of solar character. The ritual was elaborate. Part of it was abstinence of food and women. The high priest and his companions made self—sacrifices, consisting of pinching their skins with thorns until it bled. Also in passing strings through their tongues and phallusses. The strings were made of entwined hem—sisal, or of cotton. Mayans had a developed ethno—Botany and could cure infections that originated in such practices. They used antibiotics that we now call peniciline. That ceremony is described in our major work already quoted.

**THE MAYAN ARCH.**— As we have explained in the preliminar notions of Mayan Geometry given in this guide, the false arch was copied from the scales of the Mayan rattlesnake. Strange as it may seem, the pattern of the Mayan arch or vault is there. The position of the stones in the arch is exactly the same as in the rattler's Canamayté. Mayan art was closer to the Tzab—Can pattern for they had it at home, and therefore we find more of its elements in it.

**JAMBS:** There are 2 at the entrance of the temple. In each one there is a relief depicting a Toltec warrior. These wear helmets and atlatl which was an instrument of war of the Toltecs. In the jambs there are still part of the original colors with which they were painted.

**SERPENT HEADS:** Each stairway has in its sides a big rattlesnake head with open jaws. In Mayan religion, 2 serpents expressed the idea of "Precious Twins", that is, Sun and Moon, or maybe the 2 solstices. The open mouths of the rattlers symbolize the act of Creation, for the Sun—god was conceived in the form of a rattlesnake. In the Popol—Buj, which is a sort of Bible of the Maya—Quichés, the Creator is referred to as "He the Serpent". The Author of this guide discovered that the Sun—god represented in the center of the Aztec Calendar Stone comes out from a rattlers' mouth. This idea of the Sun coming out or being born from the Serpent's mouth is found in many ancient Maya sites and must be considered as of Yucatanian origin. It shows Mayan influence on Toltec and Aztec civilizations. At Labná there are splendid examples. This shows that Toltec influence was a matter of form, not of substance. Upon reaching Yucatan or Maya Toltecs learned and adopted many new things. When Quetzalcoatl was expelled from Tula by the Mexicans he came to the "land of his ancestors", as Aztecs told Spanish conquest—time chroniclers.



**MERLONS:** The Lofty House had merlons on the roofrails. In Spanish they are called "almenas". Some think that those merlons have the form of cut—in—half sea—shells.

This is a wrong idea. Indeed, they are square according to the rattlesnake fret pattern. Each one has on top a stylized rattle. Rattles of the rattlesnake are the main solar symbol, for they mean Time and New Life.

### SUB—PYRAMID

It seems to have also 9 platforms or terraces. The paraments are plain. It also has above a temple. At the end of a tunnel made by archaeologists in the pyramid was found a structure with the form of an altar. In front of it there was buried on earth a box of stone full of objects such as small jadeite masks, mosaic—discs, turquoise collars, pieces of gold, string of corals and diverse things, all precious for the Mayans. The box or urn was found near the stairway of the sub—pyramid.

**COSMOGONIC DISCS.**— They are made of jadeite, coral and turquoise, with a frame of wood. They are two and each has 4 rattlesnakes made in mosaic, each one representing a "corner" of heaven, according to the Motul Mayan Dictionary. They are cosmogonic serpents in relation with the Sun and Time. The discs are in the Museum of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia of Mexico.

**"SHIELDS".**— Solar—disc representations in the form of shields appear on the outside of the sub—pyramid. In them are stylized rattles.

**JAGUAR THRONE.**— A red jaguar was found in the sub—pyramid. It has eyes made of jade. In its back there is a solar emblem.

**SO—CALLED CHACMOOL.**— This name is scandalously false. The real one perhaps will never be known. The statue represents a priest or deity lying down on its back, with bent knees. It holds a Four—Rattle—Square with a solar disc in the center. It expresses the idea of Heaven with one rattlesnake in each corner.

**DECORATION.**— It is religious and beside the shields there are rattlesnakes, tigers, coats of arms. The Toltec elements present there suggest that origin.

### THE BALL COURT

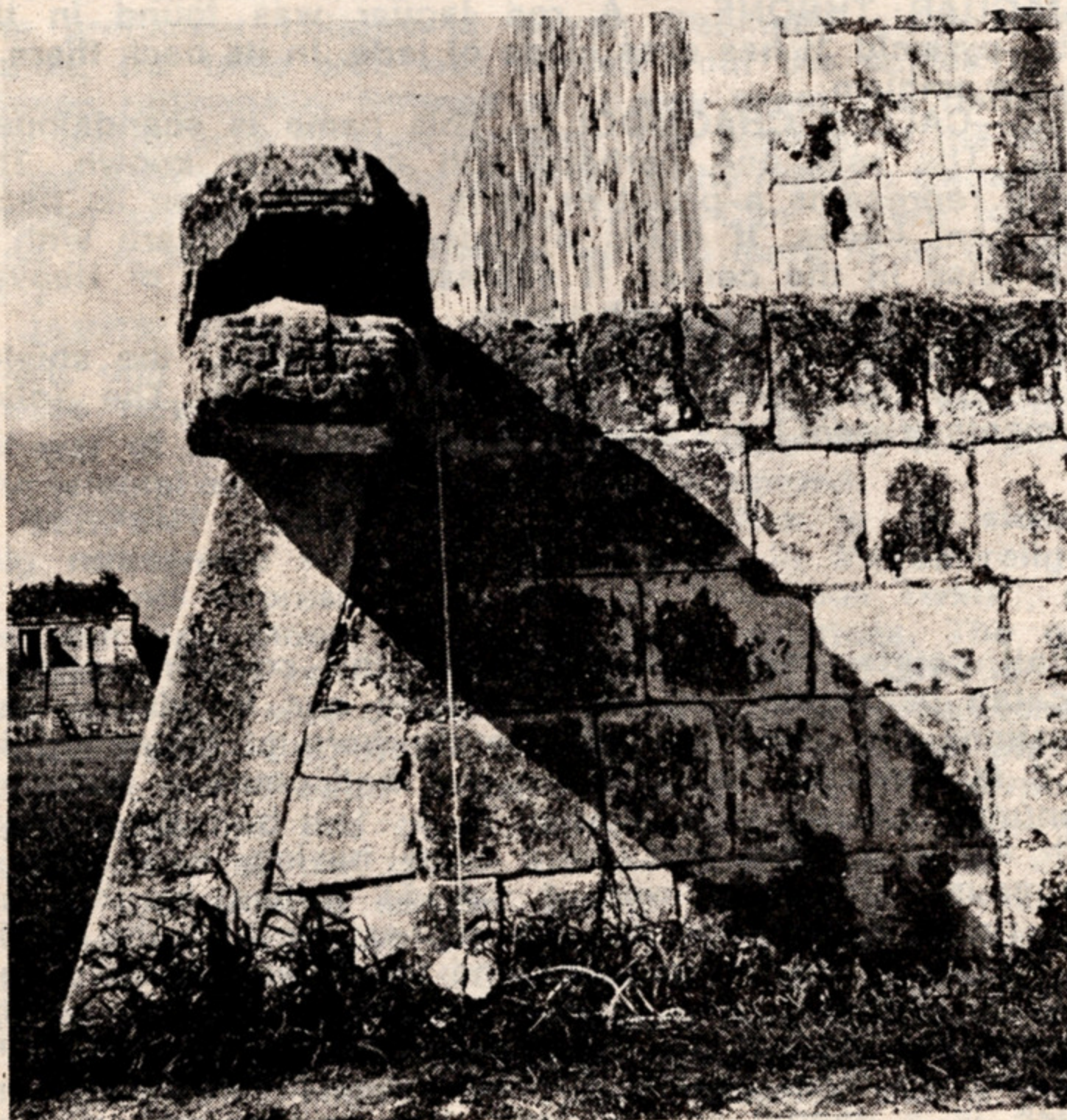
Ball courts have been found in the southern part of Yucatan belonging now to Guatemala and Honduras. This questions the idea that ball—courts were of Toltec origin, as it is believed. The Chichén Itzá ball court is the most monumental one. It is divided in A: The ball court itself with its high walls and its 2 rings having, each one, a gorgeous rattlesnake with 4 (or 5) rattles in the tail. The rings are placed on the higher part of the walls. B) Temple of the Rattlesnakes and the Tigeres (known only as "The Tigers"). The felines represented in one of the freezes are jaguars. In this temple are represented more rattlesnakes than jaguars. C) The annex to the Ball Court, which is a chapel of Cuculcán, the omnipresent symbol. D) Proscenium. E) The throne of the Ball Court. In this building is the famous relief of the Bearded Man.





### A BALL PLAYER

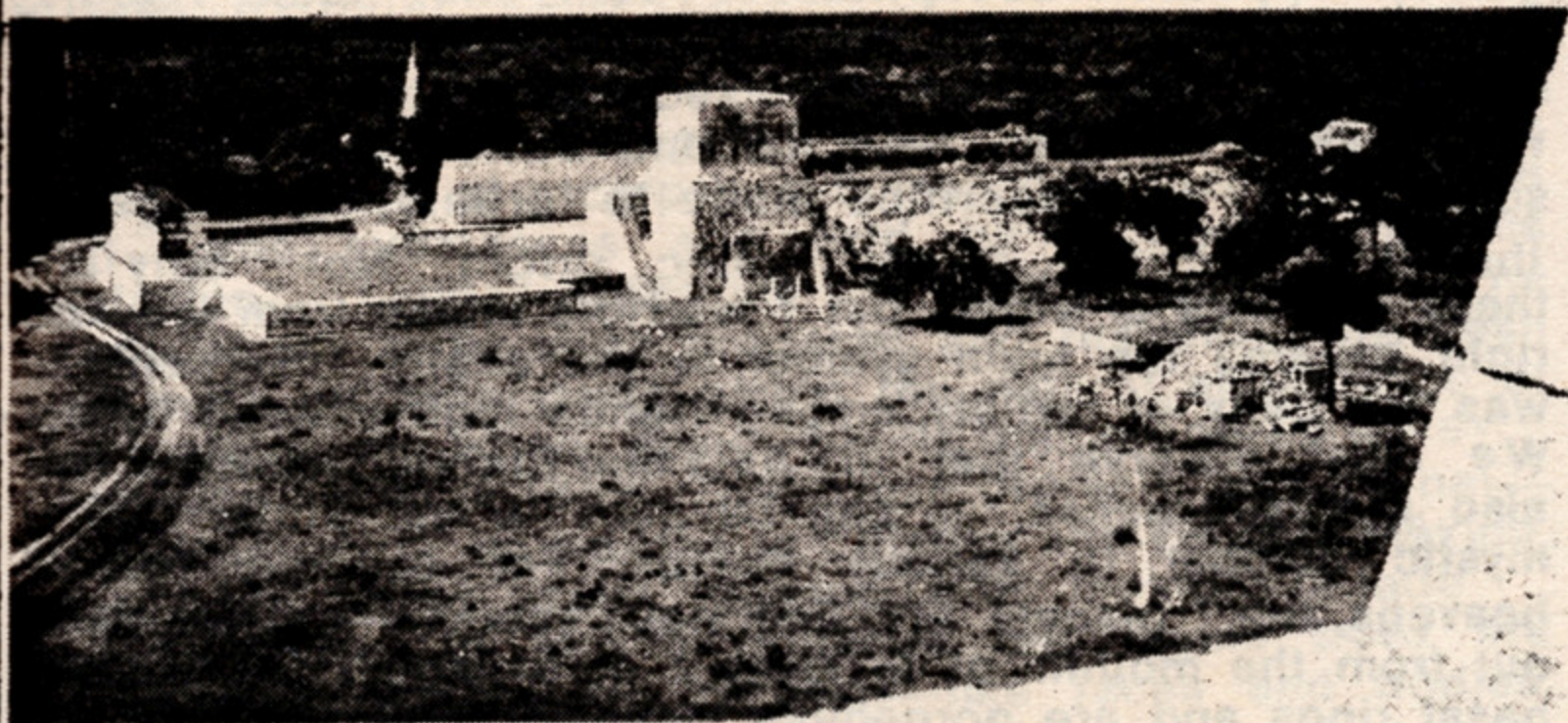
(Photo-courtesy of Professor Gualberto Zapata)



### RATTLESNAKE HEADS

There are 4 in the Ball Court. The author of this booklet discovered their use: to observe the positions of the Sun.





*The Ball—Court, the Temple of the Rattlesnakes and the Tigers and the Chapel of Cuculcán.*

The Ball Court itself is 90 meters (one meter is equal to 3 Ft. 3—3 1/8") long, and 30 wide. Including the width of the construction, it is about 60 meters wide.

**ORIENTATION.**— Northeast—Southeast.

**SIDE—RAILS.**— They are of stone as all is. They consist of Feathered Serpent representations with 4 rattles in each tail. At Chichén Itzá we find quite always rattlesnakes of 4 segments, that is, 4 rattles. This is due to being number 4 an attribute of the Sun and the rattlesnake. When we say its name in Mayan, we mean two things: rattlesnake and, at the same time, **RATTLE—FOUR**, Can is both Serpent and Four. Consequently, 4 is an attribute of Cuculcán—Quetzalcoatl.

**WALLS.**— They form a long gallery with no roof. They measure 12 meters high. Each wall has a footbank with fine reliefs. The wide stairway that leads to the upper part of the wall suggests the presence of spectators during the games.

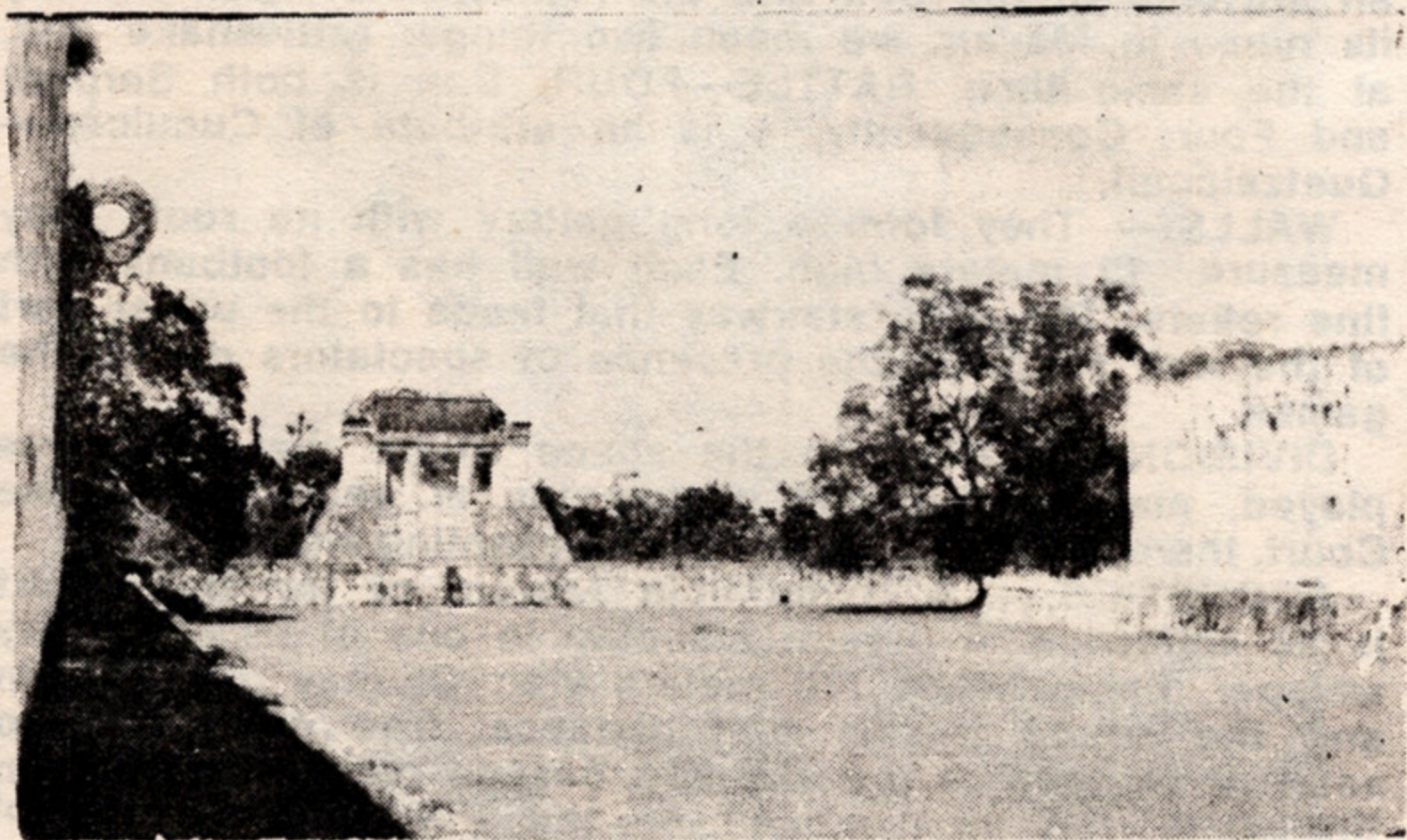
**DIVISIONS.**— Between the space where the game was played, and the tribunes or temples at each end of the Court, there were lines of stones representing snakes.

**ACOUSTICS.**— A remarkable feature of the Ball Court is its acoustics. A person standing in one of its ends may whisper, being heard 170 meters afar. Or may drop a coin and the sound travels that distance. The court has no vault. It is open to the sky and has no continuity between the walls, the prescenum and the throne or Temple of the Bearded Man. If one stands in the center of the court, near one of its walls, and claps the hands, he will hear at least 9 times the echo of the clapping. Also if one yells. This phenomena seems to be unique.

**FOOTBANKS.**— To each wall there is a footbank. They are 2 meters wide and run along the walls. They were in ruins. The dispersed stones were joined together by Mexican archaeologists.



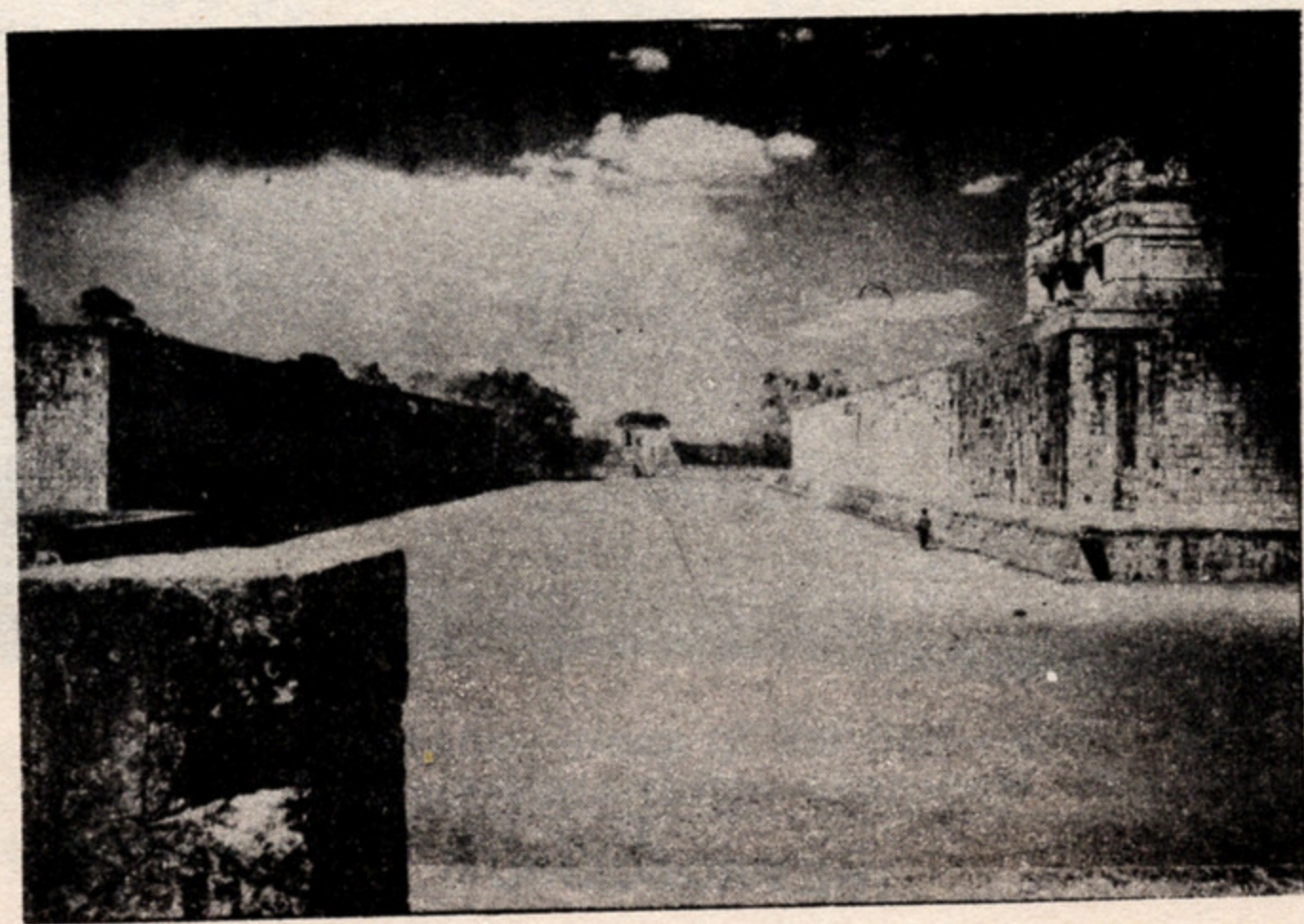
**RELIEFS.** There is depicted, in a highly elaborate style, a procession marching towards a symbol of life and regeneration. The scene at one of the footbanks seems divided in three parts. In the center is the ball, with a skull with the volute of speech (which is a stylized rattlesnake tongue) coming out of its mouth. One of the players, perhaps the captain whose team lost the game, appears decapitated. From his neck rise 7 rattlesnakes instead of blood. 7 is a sacred number. The species of the snakes is recognized by the lines with angles in them. Palacios and others think that the scene refers to a sacrifice made to fertility. He suggests that the sacrifice is of Toltec origin. Not only are there 7 snakes or vipers but 7 warriors march from left and right towards the main symbol in the center. "Serpent 7" was the deity of fertility among Nahua high plateau tribes. We must observe that in Asia and Europe, number 7 has also a mystic sense, as can be seen in the Bible. 7 is a mystic number in various senses. For example, the 7 heavens, the 7 planets, etc. Enormous speech—volutes come out from the mouths of at least 2 personages. These wear nasal rings and are gorgeously dressed. Palacios is of the opinion that the ceremony has an agrarian meaning in relation with crops, but he also sees a solar meaning to it. Both things are probable, for crops depend on Sun and rain. He also suggests that the sacrifices were to the Sun, so that he should not change his course. The ball—game was played by the high castes, priesthood and nobility. Human life and blood seems to have been the most precious offering to the Sun—god. Palacios thinks that this idea was brought to Yucatan by Toltecs. The movements of the ball represented the movements of the Sun, specially the solstices.



*Left side of the Ball—Court.*

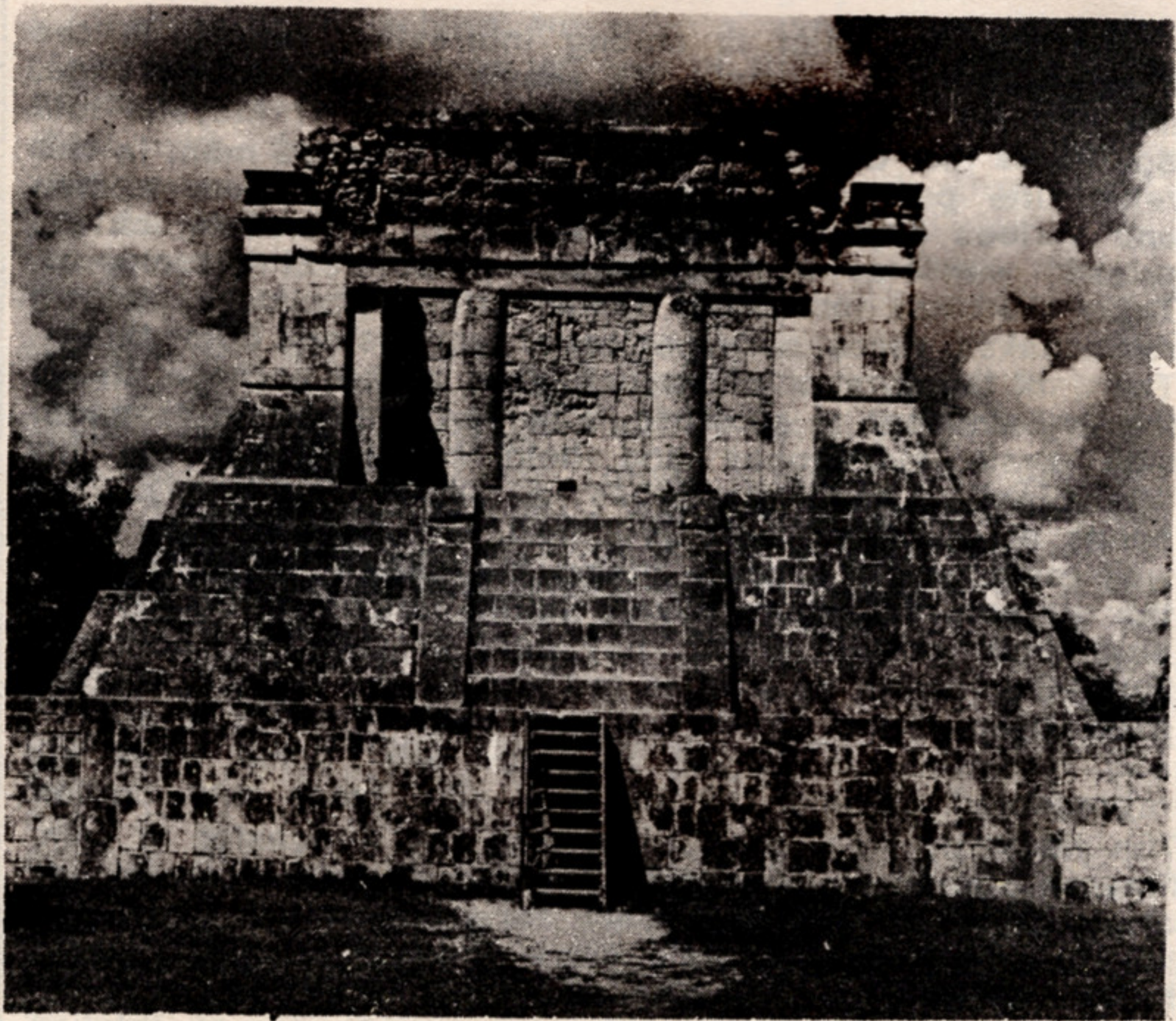


The Bearded Man is among interesting reliefs, in the back—wall of the temple. He seems to be of mature age, not old. He has a beard. Was he Cuculcán? Mayans told Spaniards that Cuculcán was a white—bearded man. In this relief, the personage has realistic features. Men, women and various objects are represented in the reliefs; chiefs, priests, warriors. Women appear in different ceremonies. There are birds and beasts, houses, trees, phalluses, stylized rattlesnakes, vases, water, celestial symbols and other things. There is the symbol of speech. One scene perhaps shows the embalmment of a corpse, a human head being prepared with some substances and held by a woman. In his "Relación", Landa describes a similar ceremony. The heads of the dead were prepared and restored. The flesh was replaced by a paste giving the natural appearance of the person as when alive. Skulls thus prepared were kept together with idols. They were praised. in Kaminal—Juyú, Guatemala, as well as in Chiapas and Oajaca, México, have been found skulls covered with mosaics of jade and turquoise. In Mayan religious art some trees are represented coming out of man—like faces and bodies. The heavenly tree, the Ceiba, was the forecaster of rain. Mayans adored it. In modern Yucatan adoration ceremonies of the ceiba are still held. They carry one of this trees from the field into the pueblo's plaza (central square) playing flutes and singing. The ceiba is planted in the center of the plaza. A ceremony exactly alike appeared in one of Chichén Itzá's mural paintings. The phallus was revered as an organ of regeneration. Penitencies were made in its honour, the priests and nobles passing a string through their organs. This can be seen in some statues of Yucatán, in which the phallus appears pierced by a rigid object. The skin of the male organ was cut with thin obsidian blades. Men were represented performing this ceremony. Brief, and illustrate Toltec the reliefs are of great importance and illustrate Mayan every—day practices and ceremonies.

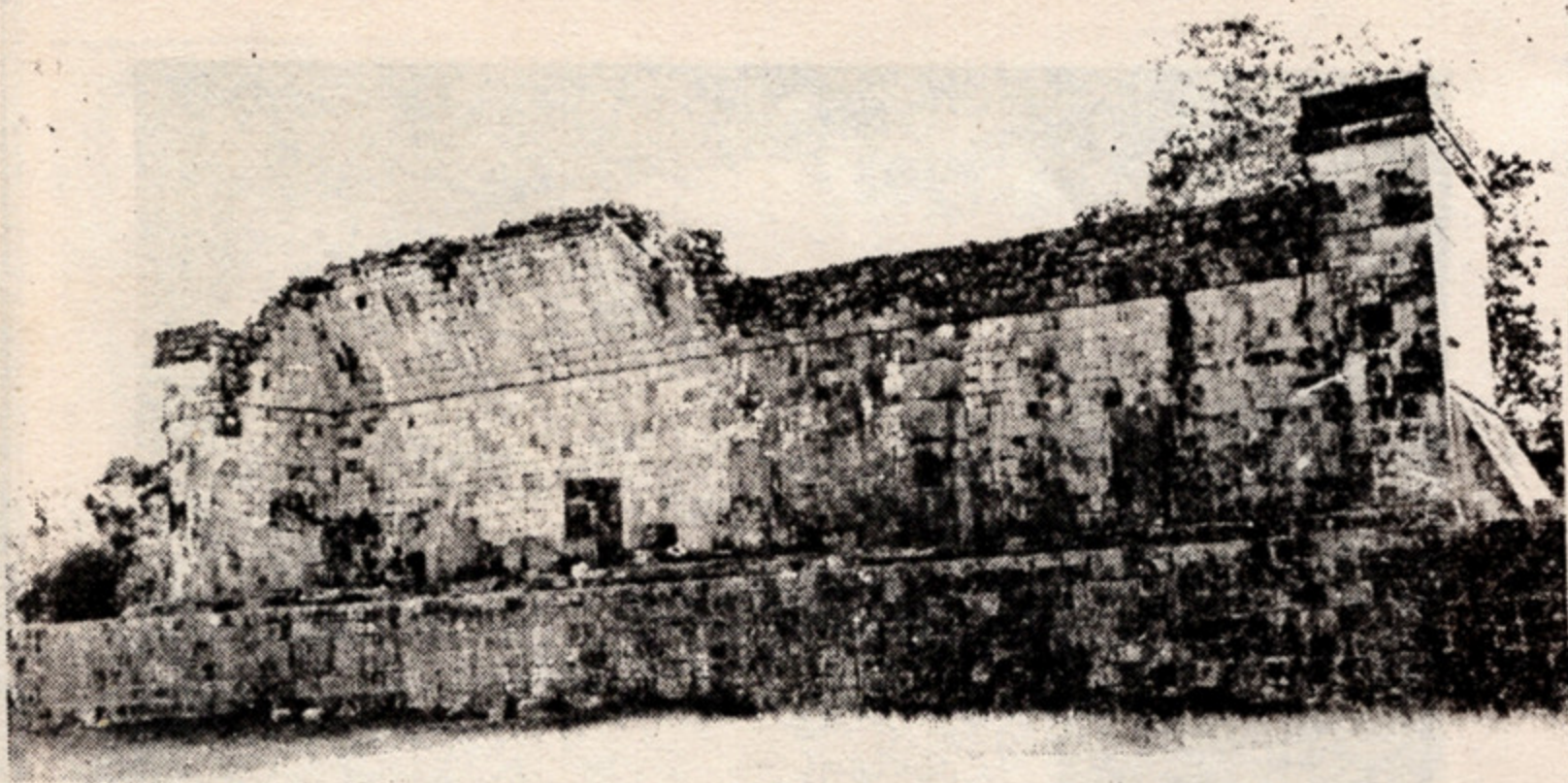


*The Ball—Court. To the right, above, the Temple of the Rattlesnakes and the Tigers. At the end, the throne or Temple of the Bearded—Man.*





**The Throne or Temple of the Bearded—Man, in the Ball—Court.**



### **THE PROSCENIUM**

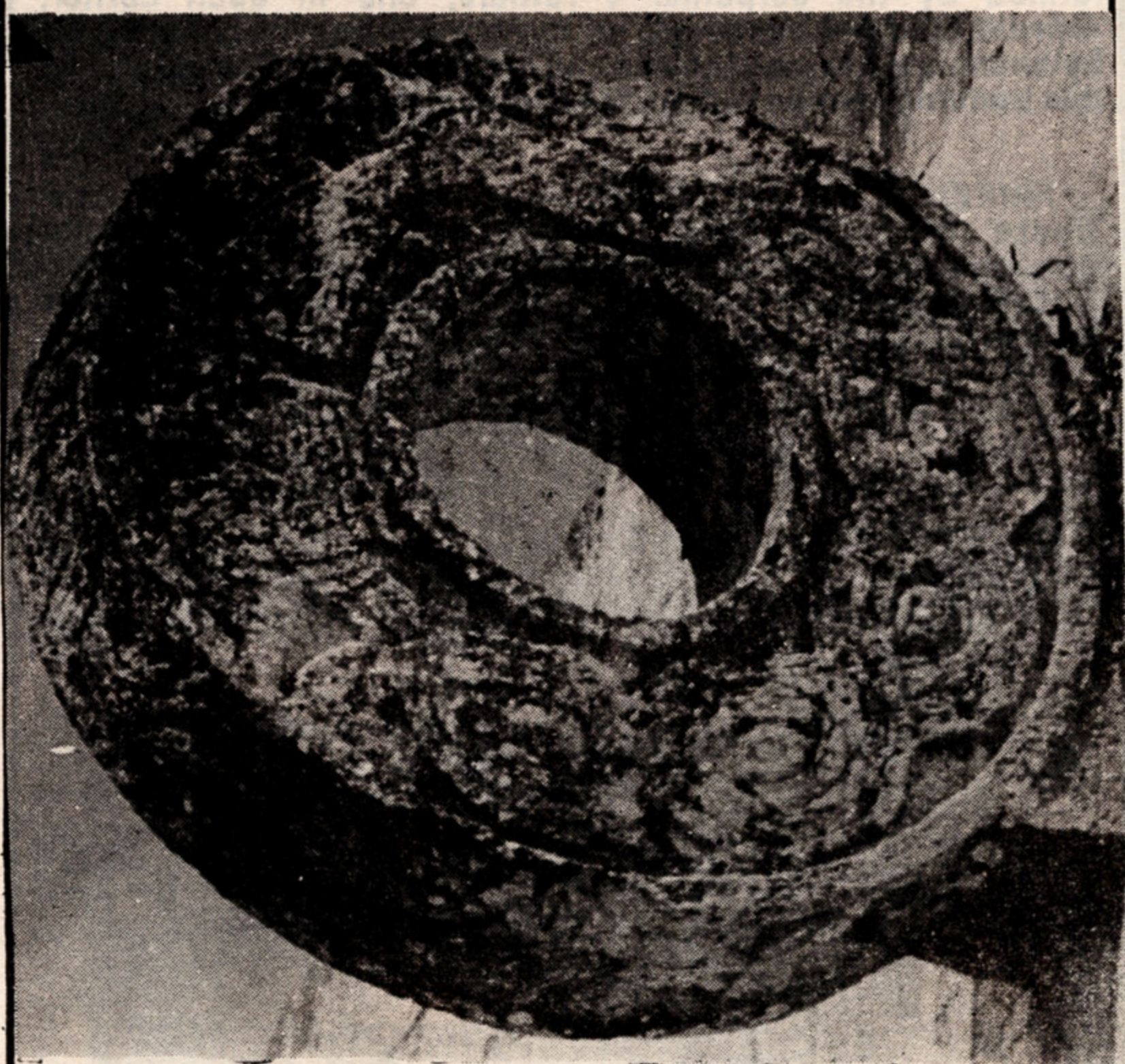
It is in the opposite end of the so—called temple of the Bearded Man. Some think it was a theatre for plays and dances. Perhaps Cuculcán sat on the other end of the Ball Court, in his throne. The Proscenium is of a simple, pure, elegant style. It has the Mayan vault as do completely all the buildings of Chichén Itzá, a fact showing that



Toltecs adapted their art to Mayan culture during their stay at Chichén. It has no reliefs. It may have been painted in colors. Many stones were missing when it was rebuilt.

### TEMPLE OF THE BEARDED MAN

It is on the opposite side of the Proscenium, in the northern extreme of the Ball Court. It suggests the form of a tribune. The temple was built upon another structure or temple. A short but steep stairway leads up. The side—rails are part of the sub—structure. The lower part of the building has the talus form, that is, of inclined walls. It has 2 columns and cornices. It has a porch. Parts of the building have been lost. The columns are not in the rattlesnake pattern.



*One of the 2 great stone—rings of the Ball—Court. Each ring has 2 entwined Feathered—rattle—Serpents. The rings are placed high above on the walls.*

### TEMPLE OF THE RATTLESNAKES AND THE JAGUARS

It is upon the east platform of the ball—court.  
ALTITUDE.— Resting on one of the walls, it is 12 meters above the ground.

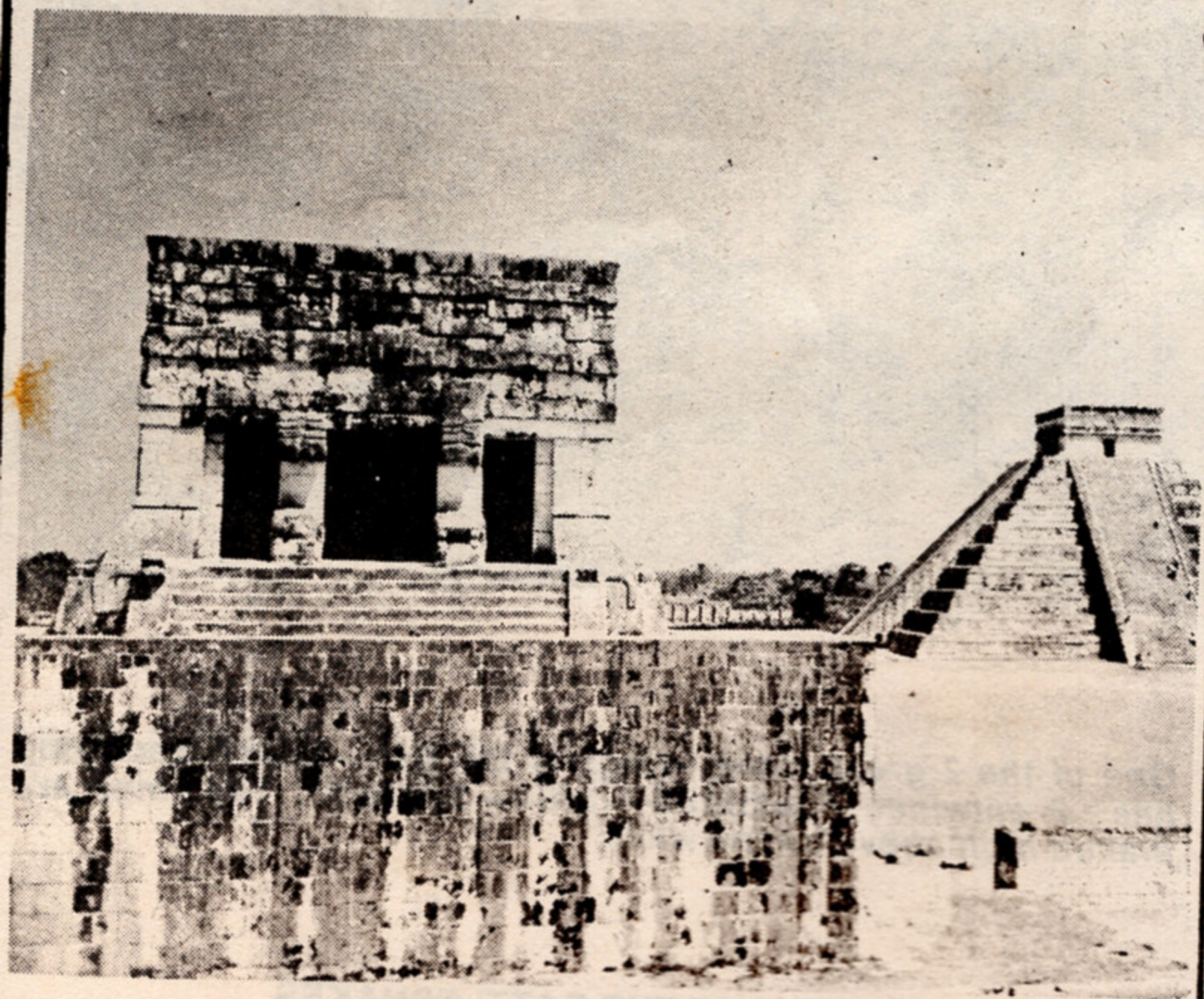


**CHAMBERS.**— It has 2. The outer one is part of a porch that has magnificent Feathered—Precious—Serpents with volant lintels. The columns stand on part of the rattlesnake's bodies and on the heads of these. It is possible that there should have been jades or obsidians in place of the eyes.

**FRIEZES.**— Three of these are of rattlesnakes and one is of jaguars. Between the jaguars there are round—solar shields with rattles in them. At Chichén Itzá the tails of the jaguars are frequently represented with broken—lines, expressing the rattlesnake idea. Their ears are frequently stylized in the form of rattles.

**CORNERS.**— In each corner of the temple there is the protruding head of a rattlesnake. On each side of the temple can be seen the body of a rattler near the corner where a head is. The rattles are artistically dropping down, 4 in each string. This gives "movement" to the serpent—freeze formed by the serpents. 4 rattlers, one in each corner, represented the "corners" of the Mayan heaven, conceived by them as having 1 rattler in each corner. Consequently, this building may be called "The House of Heaven".

**FRIEZE OF BALUSTERS.**— Just below the upper freeze of rattlesnakes there is one of small beautiful columns resembling balusters. These are characteristic of Yucatanian Mayan art and we have them also at the great palace of Zayil. The ball in the center of each one perhaps represents the Sun, for the extremes of the balusters might mean the idea of 4 movements of the Sun.



Temple of the Rattlesnakes and the Tigers, Known only as "The Tigers". Here are at least 4 times more rattlesnakes than tigers of jaguars. To the right in the background, the Lofty House.





**TEMPLE OF THE RATTLESNAKES AND THE JAGUARS.** Its square form is an image of Heaven. The portruding rattlesnakes in the corners are the 4 ones in the sky, according to Mayan religion.







DETAIL



Three Feathered Serpent friezes in the Temple of the Rattlesnake and the Jaguars. The bowl-like-motif seems to have been copied after a similar motif that some Yucatanian rattlesnakes have on their heads.



## CUCULCAN'S CHAPEL

This is an annex to the Ball Court. In the center of the main wall, there is a magnificent feathered rattlesnake presiding the temple. It has 4 rattles in its tail. The symbol of speech comes out from its mouth. A procession of priests is depicted at both sides of the Feathered Serpent. From right and left, the priests advance toward the center. At least two of them offer to the rattlesnake that which is characteristic of him: rattles. These symbolize chronology, new life, regeneration, for each time the rattlesnake sheds its skin and becomes young again, he adds one more rattle. The priests hold two or more bags of rattles. This is like wishing the Feathered Serpent (which is the symbol of the Sun) a long life. Mayans and other aboriginals of the Americas thought the Sun would die when a major chronological period came to an end



*The scenes in the reliefs are divided by cords of entwined snakes. In them appear rattlesnakes all over.*

In the 2 columns of the temple there are serpentine masks representing the phenomena of regeneration. The masks are in the lower parts of the columns. They have ear rings with 2 rattles each. Rain flows from the eyes of the masks. These connect with big rattlers above them. The tails of the rattlesnakes that connect with the masks end in large stylized rattles. This means Sun and rain solar symbol, the major solar arch in summer causes a major evaporation and, thus, condensation and precipitation. The Sun gives light, heat and rain; that is, Life. The rain that flows from the masks' eyes gives life to earth and sea creatures such as fish, turtles and birds depicted in the lower part of the reliefs; also water lilies. This symbol has been wrongly interpreted. An author wrote that it refers to the idea of Evolution, such as Darwin's.





***The Cuculcán Chapel, an annex to the Ball—Court.***



***Detail in one of the pillars in Cuculcán's chapel. From the tail of a rattlesnake is formed a Rain—God mask. The relief alludes to Creation, Life and Regeneration.***





In the right side of the chapel's facade there is part of a relief depicting a priest. Little is left of it. The hand of the priest is in a position affecting the form of a rattler's head.

The solar meaning of the great rattlesnake can be clearly understood if we consider that it has a solar disc.

Near the Feathered Serpent there is a personage completely arrayed with symbolic figures. Snakes come out from his body. Above, to the left, a priest advances towards the central motif with a bowl in his hands. In the bowl there are no less than 7 rattlesnake—heads. His purse is tied artistically with a rattler. To the right, there are 3 personages. The one in front of the Serpent has 1 rattlesnake tied in each leg. He wears a pectoral similar to the ones the great statues of Tula have. From his mouth comes out also the volute of speech. In the right side of the lower part, 2 priests offer the Feathered Serpent 2 bags of rattles, of which we have already spoken. The scene is one of the major accomplishments in Mayan art. It is a fine work of art. The religious meaning of it is unique and cannot be compared with any other religion in Asia, Europe and Africa, for we have here another type of thinking, based on the rattlesnake, which exists only in the Americas. On the other hand, it represents a type of thought pertaining to the Neolithic Age. In the relief, the serpent has a crown supposed to be of turquoise, a sacred stone due to its green—bluish color, which are the colors of the sea and heaven. The personage that appears with the great serpent also has a crown and a big mask. He has a pectoral with the solar disc, earrings, plumage and other arrays that enhances him as a high priest—king. Perhaps he was Cuculcan. The personages at his sides have a Toltec aspect. They wear feathered head—dresses. Some have helmets in the form of eagle heads. We also see the atlatl which was a war instrument of the Toltecs, arrows and a bird in front



of one of the personages. Some of them have crowns supposed to be of turquoise mosaic. Nearly all have on their chests the same insignia that the so-called Chac—Mools have.

In these reliefs of Cuculcān's Chapel are represented the most precious objects of Mayans and Toltecs. The scene means an adoration of the Sun. When the Sun is in the equinox, it rises in front of the chapel, between the 2 columns of the temple. It lights directly on the Great Feathered Serpent.



Another priest in the Chapel. His head comes out of a rattler's head. This has 8 rattles. The rattler has, on its back, a line or braid of about 20 rattles. All this obvious—ever—present, rattlesnake symbolism was not suspected before my first discovery and, when I announced that Mayan art was based on that viper, archaeologists execrated me. Observe the rattlestring near the left foot of the priest. Above, the horizontal line of entwined snakes.

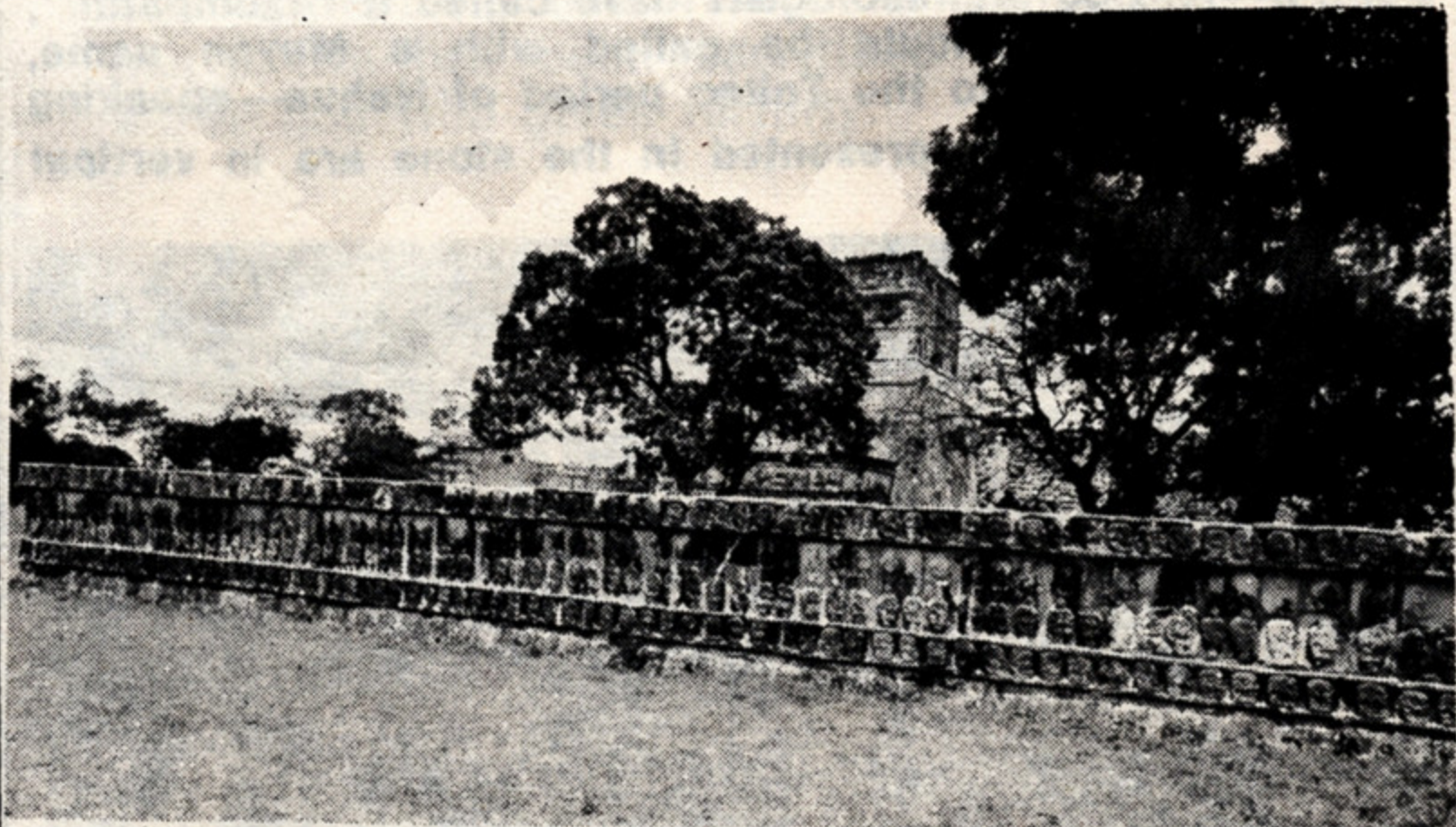


# INSTRUCTIVE GUIDE TO THE RUINS OF CHICHEN ITZA by JOSE DIAZ—BOLIO



**One of the priests in Cuculcán's Chapel. Observe the great rattlesnake with its 4 rattles. From the head of the Feathered Serpent comes out the face of the priest. The plumage in the tail is long, meaning perhaps that Time is long also, or that the Sun—god has a long life.**

## THE WALL OF SKULLS



**The Tzequil or place of skulls, called "Tzompantli", which is a foreign name in Maya—Yucatán. This construction is a platform. Spanish chroniclers mentioned it. In the platform were kept the skulls of sacrificed people. This structure**





### DETAIL

belongs to the Toltec period of Chichén Itzá. Two so-called "Chac—Mool" statues were found in it when rebuilt. Central—Mexico archaeologists have called it "Tzompantli", but we think it should be called with a Mayan name, even if it belongs to the Toltec period of Nahua—speaking people. The skulls represented in the stone are in vertical rows of 4.



PLATAFORM OF SKULLS.  
(Detail)





PLATFORM OF SKULLS.  
(Detail)

Walking skeleton with a rattlesnake tying his feet. The rattlesnake has 4 rattles. Symbolism: that a man's life has been sacrificed to the Sun-rattlesnake god who gives fertility.



DETAIL





### DETAIL

In the upper part is an undulating rattlesnake. Its body is divided in 4 fragmented lines (number 4 is an attribute of the sun and of the rattlesnake). In the center appears an eagle eating a human heart. (Toltecs, or perhaps Mexicans, introduced human sacrifices and religious anthropophagy in Yucatan).



### DETAIL



**TEMPLE OF TIGERS AND EAGLES**

This structure belongs also to the Toltec period. Of course it has also the Feathered—Rattle—Snake symbol. But its main features are Tigers and Eagles eating human hearts. This platform is dedicated to the Eagle and Tiger Knighthoods. These had the “job” of making captives for sacrifices. Those knighthoods were of Toltec origin. Mayans had a strong despise for strange gods, on account of their bloody rituals. Later, there was a strong opposition and even enmity between Mayan and Mexican religions. Toltec civilization came to an end when Mexicans appeared as a nation. So did Mayan civilization.



**Reconstruction of a procession of warriors and musicians playing long trumpets and wood—drums.**





*Reconstruction of a procession at Chichén Itzá.*



*Eagle devouring a human heart. Temple of the Eagles and the Jaguars, which are also depicted eating human hearts.*





**Gorgeous undulating Feathered Serpent in the Temple of the Eagles and the Jaguars. The tail has 4 rattles.**



**Rattlestring on the mouth of a personage in the Temple of the Eagles and the Jaguars. This same symbol occurs at Perú. (See "La Serpiente Emplumada, eje de culturas", pages 305—306). It is a symbol of the Sun's face.**

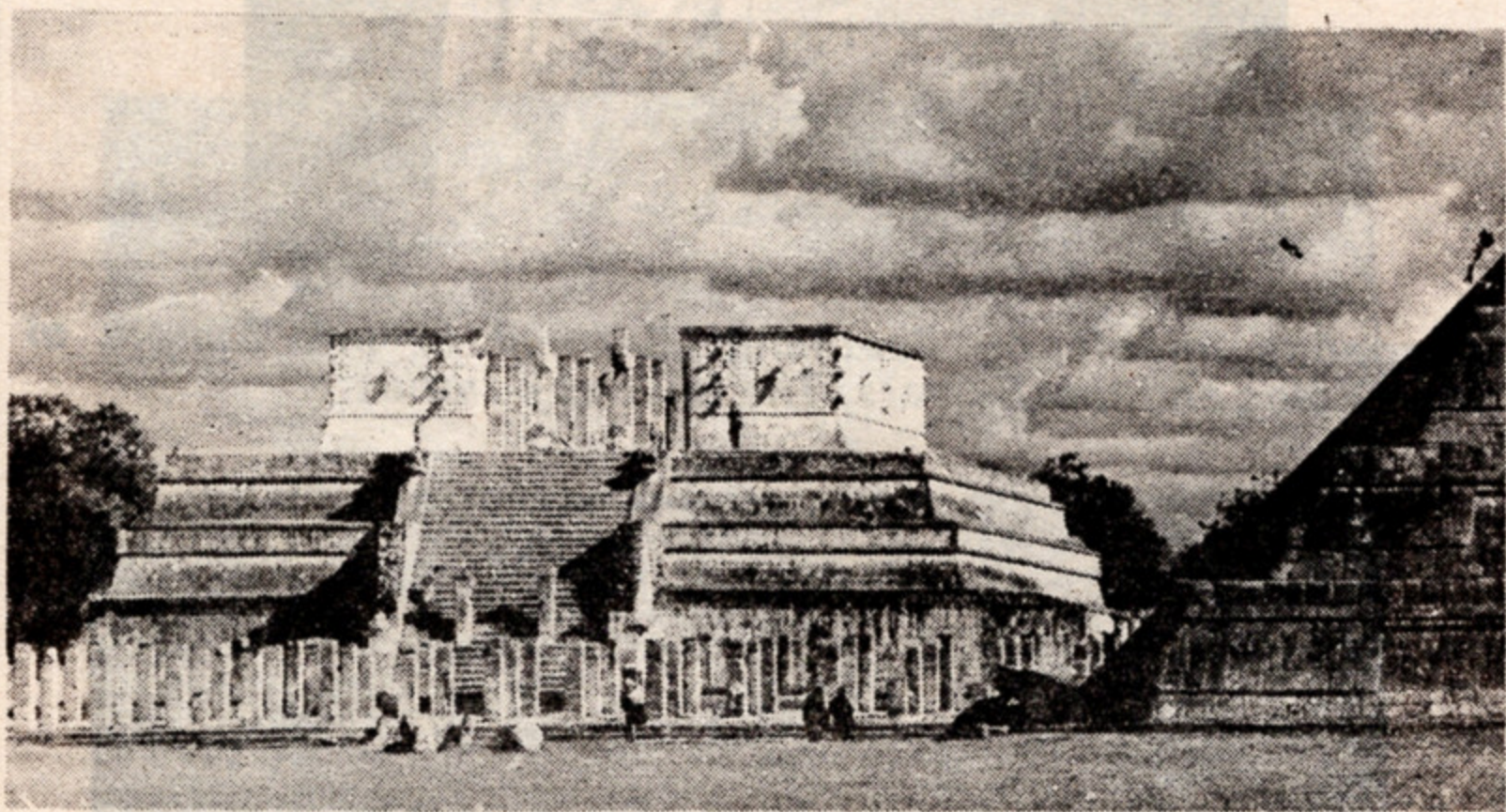


**"TOMB OF THE CHACMOOL"**  
(Platform of Venus)

Here we have two wrong names for an unknown object. In it was discovered the famous so—called Chac—Mool. The platform has beautiful rattlesnake symbols and, as a characteristic, the Pop sign that belongs to the first month of the Mayan calendar. The use of this platform is unknown as are those of other temples.

**TEMPLE OF THE SUN**  
(Called "The Warriors")

We hold that this temple should be called thus, for it has on each side 2 gorgeous high—reliefs of the Sun coming out of a serpent's mouth. In our major book we show that the Sun—god in the center of the Aztec Calendar Stone is represented coming out of the mouth of a rattlesnake; that is, the one of the East. Aztecs took this idea from Toltecs, who seem to have taken it from the Mayans, for this symbol appears in places like Labná.



*Temple of the Sun ("The Warriors"), with part of the "One Thousand Columns" complex. The temple has 4 platforms; number 4 being a solar one.*

**STYLE.**— It is in the best of Chichén Itzá, corresponding to that of the "Lofty House of Cuculcán", the so—called "Snail" (Caracol), the Ball Court and the "One Thousand Columns", assigned all to the later part of Chichén Itzá, when it was governed by Toltecs which, of course, were influenced by Mayan art and religion. That may have occurred from 1,000 A.D. to the 15th Century. When I visited Chichén Itzá in 1924, all that could be seen of this temple was a high mound near the "One Thousand Columns" site, also in ruins. There, U.S.A. archaeologists of the Carnegie Institution of Washington made a fine work of reconstruction that seemed unattainable.

**PYRAMIDAL BASE.**— The temple is upon a 4 platforms base (observe the frequent occurrence of number 4), 40 meters long in each side.



**STAIRWAY.**— It is 10 meters 30 centimeters wide, with an inclination of 66°. It has 36 steps.

**COLORS.**— It was painted in red, blue, green, sepia and yellow.

**NAME.**— It was called "Temple of the Warriors" on account of the warriors depicted in the columns. Perhaps they were guardians of the Sun. They belonged to the "Tigers" and "Eagles" knighthoods.

**SANCTUARY.**— It is in the upper part. For some archaeologists this is one of the best things made by all American Indians, an appreciation that seems too personal. Other sites in Yucatán have magnificent buildings. Still, "The Warriors" is something beyond excellency.

**CUCULCAN.**— The god—man—Feathered—Serpent—Rattle—Snake, that is, the Sun, is represented twice in each side of the building. It represents the rising Sun, exactly as it appears in the "Aztec Calendar Stone". In our book already quoted, we signal that the Sun—god in the center of that stone appears coming out of the mouth of a rattlesnake; that is, the rattler of the East, for the Mayans believed that there was one in each corner of the sky or heaven. Thus, the religious importance of the Mayan rattlesnake is shown by the fact that heaven was represented in its form. This is the same symbol of the so—called "Queen of Uxmal", which was not a woman nor a queen, but the symbol of the rising Sun. We were the first to understand this representation and we explain it fully in our book. In the great engraved stone that covered the celebrated tomb of Na—Chan (Palenque) the Sun—god is also represented coming out from the jaws of a rattlesnake;



*Column in the Temple of the Sun.*



only that the mouth is only represented by its bones. From it comes out the Sun, in the form of a young man. This representation ends the hypothesis that tries to explain the Feathered Serpent as meaning Venus star or wind. Astronomically it is impossible that the Sun may come out of the star Venus. The rattlesnake concept was so deep in included the form of heaven, based on the Canamayté's square



**A solar statue called, erroneously as nearly everything has been called in Mayan archaeology, "Chac—Mool".... It holds a solar disc.**



**SUB—PYRAMID.**— Of the Temple of the Sun ("Warriors"). It was discovered by E. Morris of the Carnegie Institution. It also has 4 platforms. Also talus. (The talus principle was originated in the pattern of the rattlesnake, for in it there is the model of the inclined parament. This fact enabled us to explain the origin of the volant lintel at Tajín, Veracruz, which is based also on the Canamayté of the Yucatanian rattler (see "The Geometry of the Mayans at Tajín", "AREA MAYA—MAYAN AREA", Núm. 4). In its outside there are beautiful stone—shields with the Cuculcán symbols in them. Of course, the sub—pyramid is smaller than the upper one. Its plan was similar. It has beautiful columns richly engraved and painted. There is also a "Chac—Mool" and serpent columns. Visitors wanting to take pictures of this site should carry with them rapid ASA—DIN films and flashes.

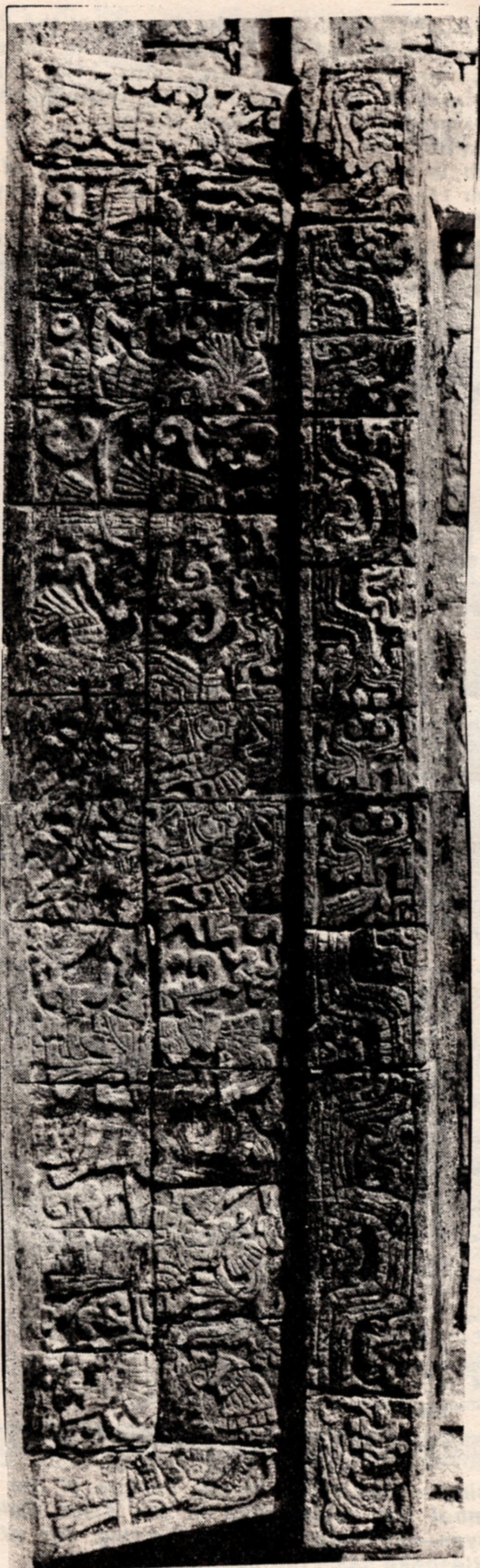


Feathered rattlesnake tails in the TEMPLE OF THE SUN, called "The Warriors".



*Rising —Sun relief in the Temple of the Sun. This Mayan symbol was reproduced in the Aztec Calendar Stone. The mayan—Sun—God— face coming out of the mouth of a rattlesnake has a rattlestring on its mouth.*

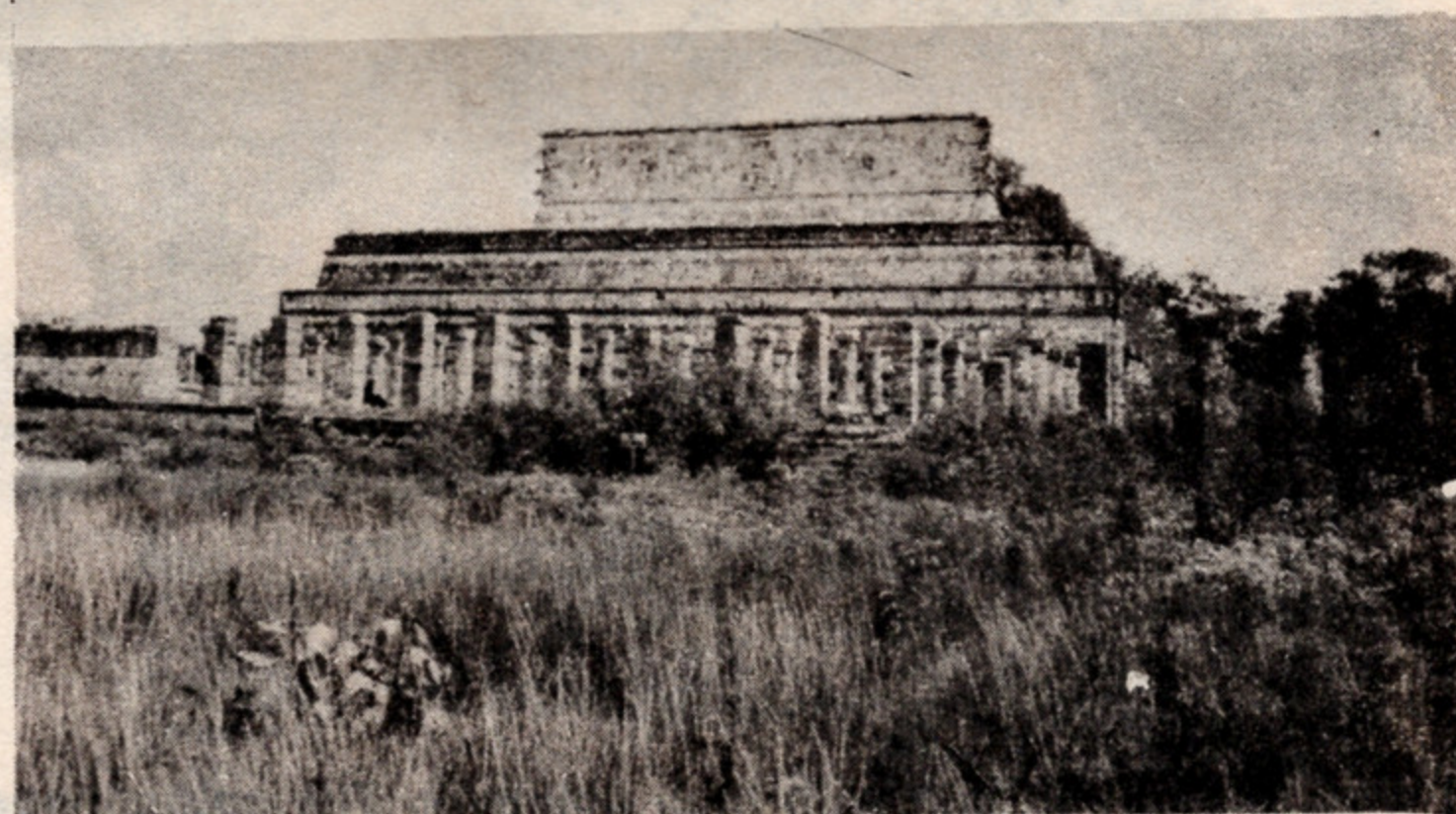
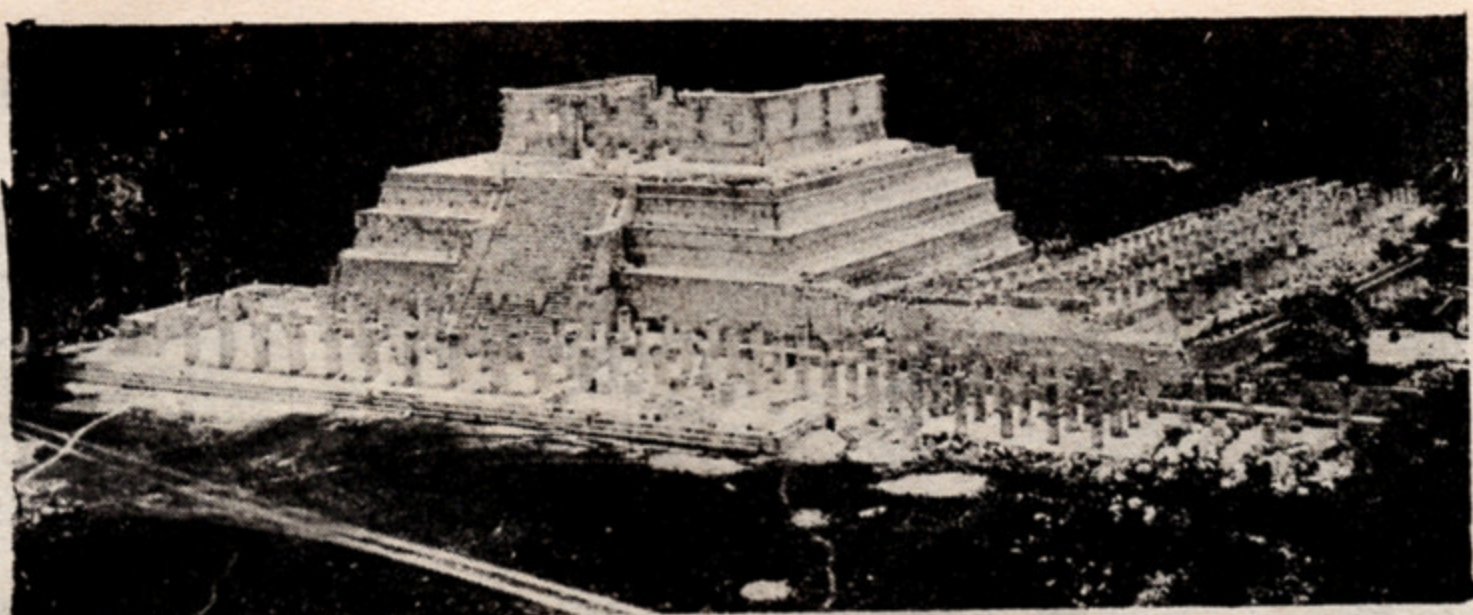




THE SCULPTURED THRONE IN THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN

The symbolism is full of rattlesnake motifs.



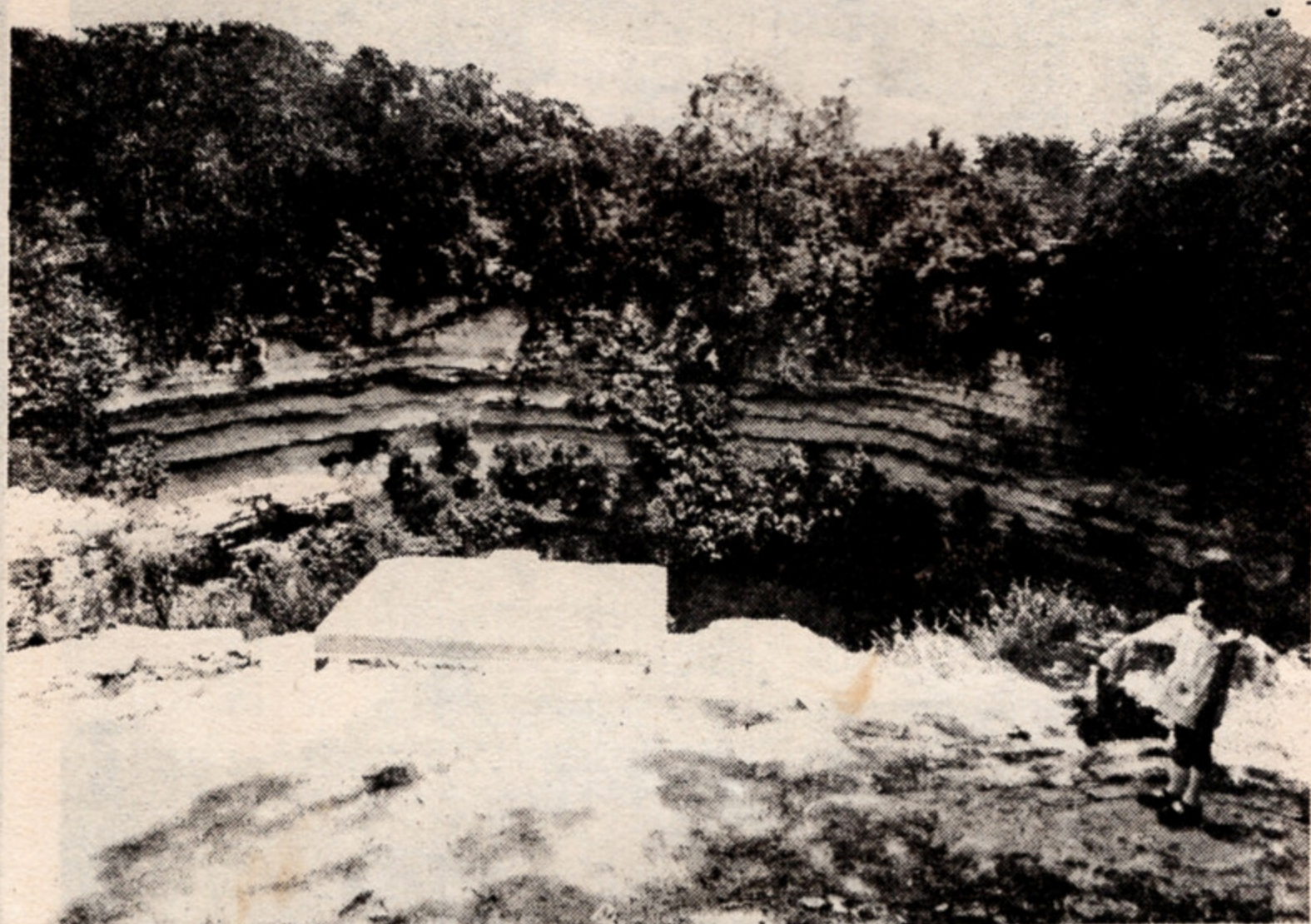


*Temple of the Sun ("The Warriors"), with part of the "One Thousand Columns" complex. The temple has 4 platforms; number 4 being a solar one.*

### THE SACRED WELL

About 300 yards (less than 300 meters) from the Lofty House of Cuculcán is the sacred well. Its diameter is about 63 meters or 65 yards. From the water to the ground level its sides measure sixty feet more or less, depending on the season. It has a layer of mud under the water surface. Speaking about the sacred well, Landa wrote: "They had the custom of throwing live men into the well during the dry season as a sacrifice and although the men were never seen again they believed that they had not died". Other sources say that virgins were thrown in sacrifice into the well, which was a place for the water cult. Some think that its wide vase or opening was artificially made. There are many others alike in the Orient of Yucatán and therefore we are of the opinion that its form is natural. In the cenote or well, Edward Thompson dredged and found many Mayan precious things, including jewels of gold, jade, emerald, turquoise, copper and shell. Chichén Itzá was a place towards which afar people roamed to, in order to make offerings to the Mayan gods; a thing that points out the influence of Mayan or Yucatanian civilization that reached far north and south of what is now Central Mexico, south of the USA, Costa Rica, and even Perú. Some objects, perhaps the majority, belong to the times of Toltec influence. "Turism" into the land of the Mayans started about 1,000 years ago. It stopped when civilization collapsed; and it started again when USA—Americans discovered Yucatanian archaeology; for they really discovered it, when nobody cared about Mayan things. At the well's edge there is a small altar. This is indeed poor, if we compare it with the Chichen Itza buildings.

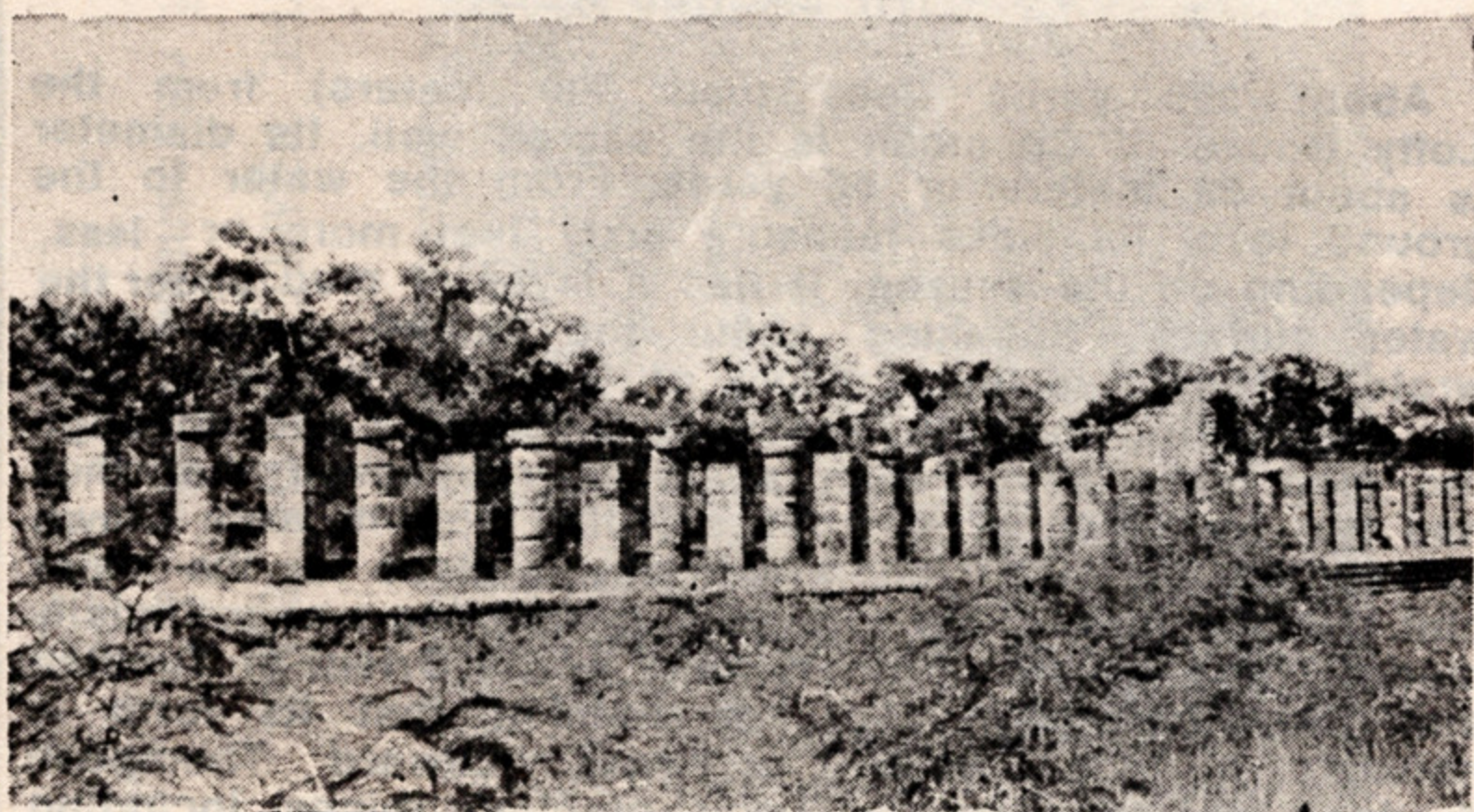




**WELL OF TOLTEC SACRIFICES**

### **THE SO—CALLED “MARKET”**

**It was a long building with high columns. The colonnade about 170 meters or yards long forms 2 parallel galleries. It probably had a roof. It has a square inside, surrounded by columns which are tall and thin.**



### **THE HOT BATH**

**The Mayan word for bath is “Ichquil”. Mayans and after—conquest Yucatanians have taken a daily bath and sometimes two or three every day, through centuries, even when bath was not a habit in Europe. Consequently, Yucatanians are one of the cleaniest people on Earth. The house of steam and sweat had a beautiful—pure Mayan architecture. Yucatanians seem to have known the healthy effects of hot bath even if they lived in a country where sweating is not an accident but an all—the—year—round phenomena. The Hot Bath house has an oven where stones were heated. It has 2 windows for ventilation, also a drainage canal.**





***The Heath—Bath house. Observe how the vault was made, following the pattern in the skin of the Mayan or Yucatanian rattlesnake.***



***Detail of the Heat—House. Note the sober—well—balanced Mayan architecture.***

### **THE OSSUARY**

It is a pyramid small but similar to the Lofty House of Cuculcán. It has above at least 2 beautifully carved rattlesnake heads. It had a stairway on each side. The sanctuary above has a portico. The side—rails of the stairways had entwined rattlesnakes, Feathered Serpent pillars, columns



with human figures carved in them and possibly, paintings. It seems to have been a fine work of art that should be reconstructed. (The author of this booklet thinks that the Maya area should be declared of international interest, as it belongs more to Humankind than to any State.

Therefore, universities and anthropological institutes as well as archaeological societies of all the World should be allowed to take charge of groups of ruins in order to explore and reconstruct them. Contrarily, hundreds and perhaps thousands of archaeological sites will be completely lost within one or two centuries, in the fight between the jungle and stones; a battle in which stones are always defeated at the end. There are in all Mexico more than 20,000 archaeological sites and the republic has not enough scientists and economical means —and will never have— to take care of all its wonderful cultural heritage).

This small lofty house received its modern name after the findings in the shaft that goes from the pyramids floor to the bottom. Some 12 meters or 36 feet down below were found human bones together with precious objects of Mayan civilization usually found in caves: jades, rock crystal, copper bells, etc. The presence of copper suggests Toltec influence, as well as architecture. Still, the Feathered Serpent style perhaps developed in Yucatán at Uxmal and was copied by Toltecs at Chichén Itzá, and from here travelled to Teotihuacan and Tula.

### THE RED HOUSE

This building is more known as the "Red House". The name came on account of a red stripe painted in the facade. It has a stairway built in the platform upon which the temple is. This has a portico and 3 chambers. The main performance here is a hieroglyphic band, carefully carved, running all around of the 4 walls of the main chamber. The doors have stone lintels. The roof has 2 combs. One rises over the central part of the roof, the other at a siderail of the roof. A nice contrast was attained by making the walls plain and the roof—combs highly decorated.



"Chichán Chob" or "Red House"; both false names.



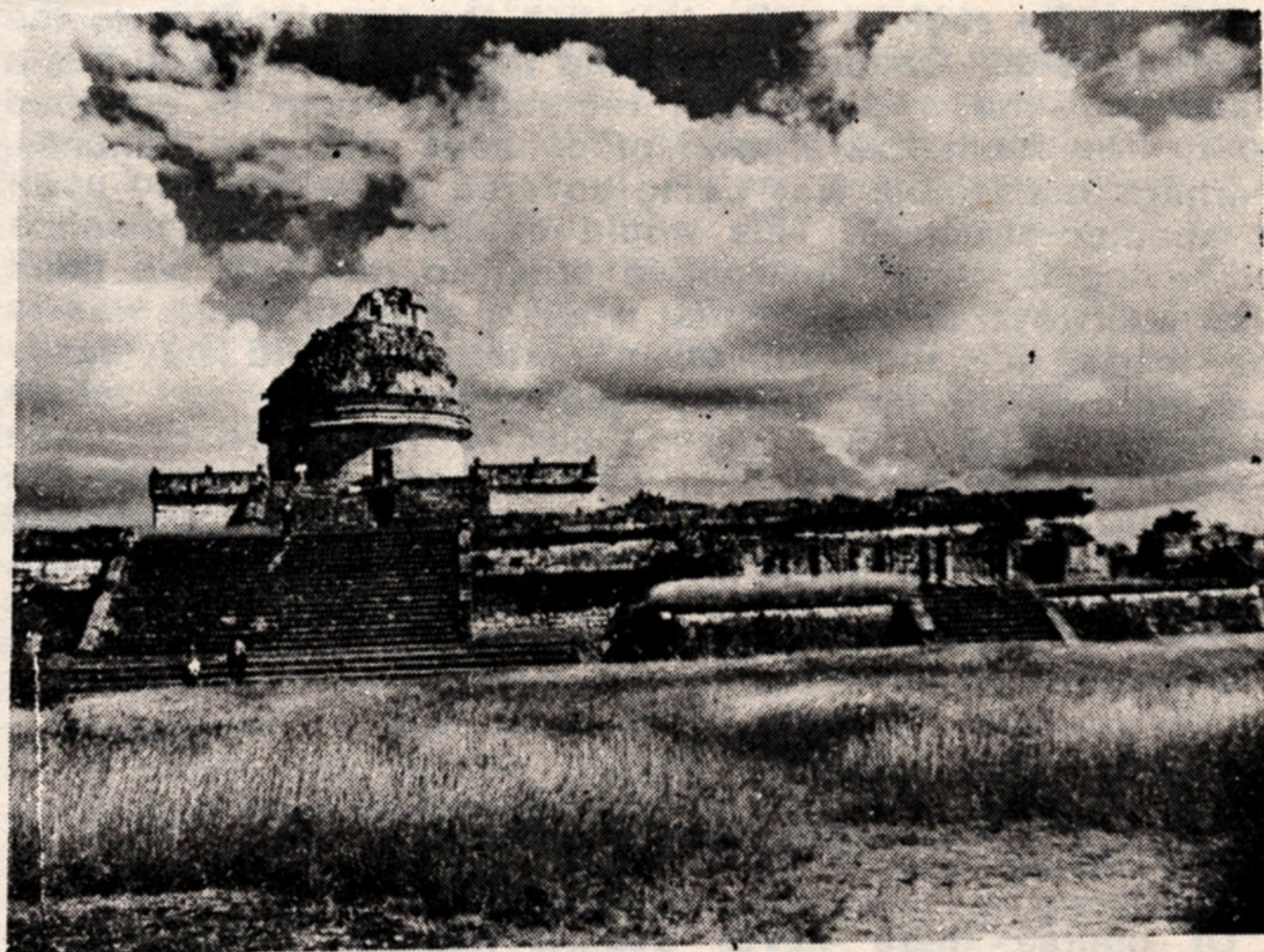
Perhaps the walls were covered with plaster and painted. In the combs are 3 masks of the Rain—God, which is a hypostasis of the Sun—God, deliverer of fire and water. Here we find the fret meaning rattlesnake. The Red House does not show Toltec influence. Maybe it was made about 700—900 A.D. It has a small sidewalk that seems to have been added later. Near this temple there are the remains of a small ball—court.

### HOUSE OF THE DEER

It is at a short distance from the Red House. In one of the rooms was a mural depicting a deer; so it was called "House of the Deer", in Spanish. All names given to Mayan sites are in this language, which is our official idiom in Mexico. This House had also a platform, a stairway, frieze. The and a simple roof—comb. It also has a plain frieze. The House of the Deer belongs to the same period to which the Red House corresponds.

### THE "SNAIL"

This is a fine temple in which Toltec influence is integrated to Mayan art. It shows, thus, the linking point of both civilizations. It is called "Snail" (Caracol, in Spanish), because it has concentric—snail—like walls. Above it has, within, a winding snail—like stairway. This stairway symbolizes the undulating movement of the Sun when passing from one solstice to another. Thus, when a



*Solar observatory erroneously called "The Snail" ("El Caracol").*

priest climbed the stairway, he had to do it after the solar way or pattern, undulatingly. This is the main reason why Mayan stairways should be climbed undulatingly, from one side—rail to the opposite one. The undulating stairway ends in a small room that seems to have served as an



observatory of the solstices. This circumstance explains still further why the undulating stairway: it is a solstitial symbol, and, being solstitial, it is solar. In its first phase, the observatory was made upon a large platform. Upon the platform was a round temple, which was an image of the Sun's disc and also of the circle which the rattlesnake makes when it coils. It had two circular galleries with a central spiral stairway, to a floor that might have been leading to a floor that might have served as an observatory. A circular platform was added below. It was afterwards covered by a platform with a stairway. In this platform there are incensaries with human head form. It is somewhat a riddle that the stairway should start, not at the floor, but at the height of the vault, so a ladder is need to ascend. Above, the tower has small openings. These were used with astronomical purposes, specially to study the cardinal points. Masks of the Rain—God are in the outside. Sitting upon the masks is a human figure framed with quetzalli feathers. There are no other round temples like this one previous to Toltec influence. There are some in the Toltec—Mexican habitat, as well as in the Huasteca. Near to the Observatory are some other constructions, among them a hot bath having no vault. It has a round tub "let into the ground". A canal filled it with water. The author of this booklet will soon publish a paper holding that some mounds in southern United States were round temples built after the cake—like pattern in which rattlesnakes lie down

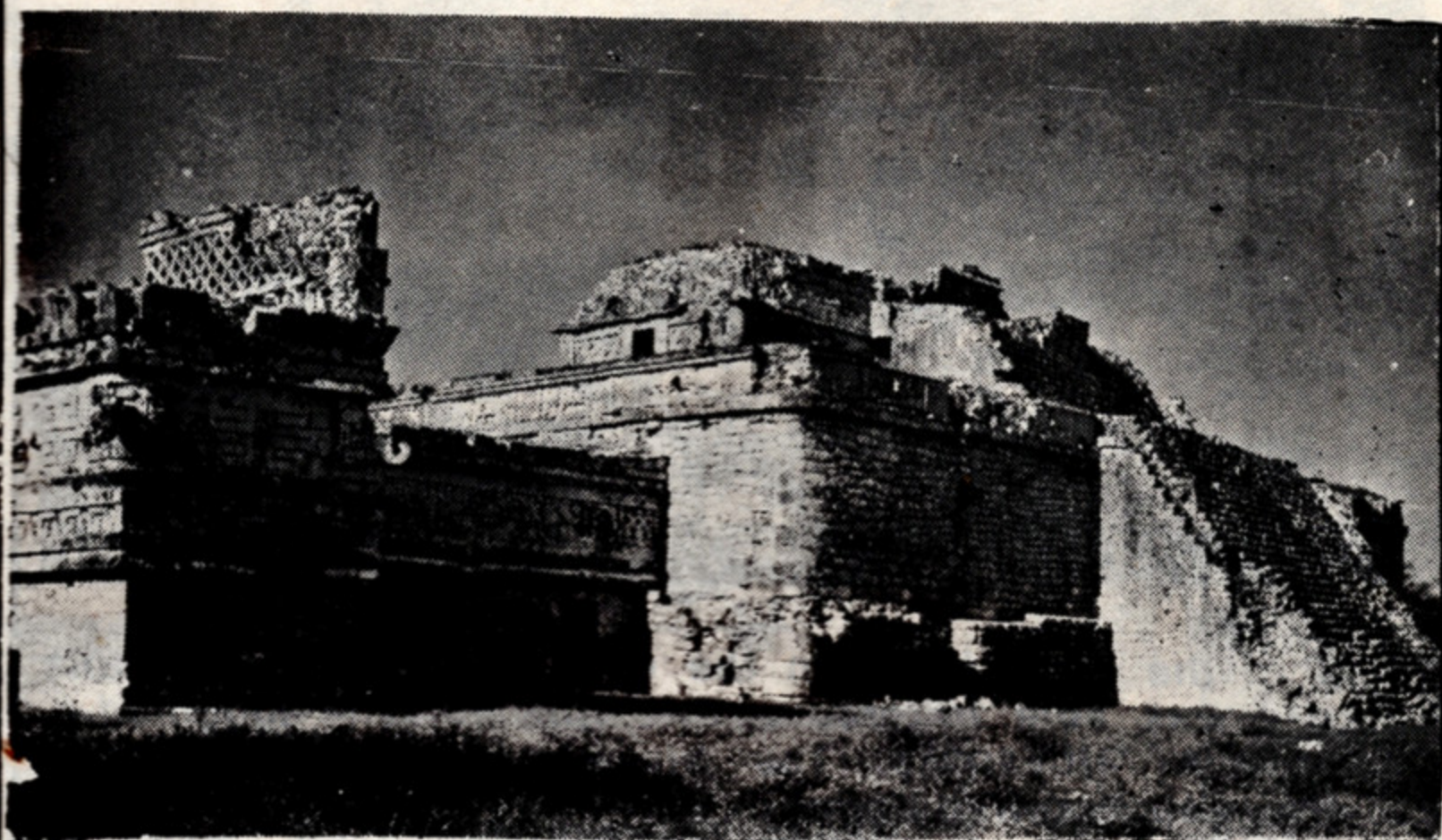
### TEMPLE OF THE PANELS

The main feature of this structure is that one has climb to the roof in order to reach the temple. It is to the east of the so—called "Snail" and the Great Palace. It has a sanctuary and a portico. A rectangular room is attached to it. The room has 2 rows of columns and also benches. Perhaps the temple was being covered so as to build upon it another structure. This would explain the circumstance of having to climb the roof in order to reach it. We think that stairways were built first when a superstructure was to be made, for then all other materials could be easily carried up. On the walls of the temple there are reliefs depicting personages assembled in rows. There is a central motif in the panel to the north, representing a hut house with 3 persons within it. In the center of another panel appear the same persons. Warriors, jaguars, birds, serpents and trees appear there. The reliefs are of Toltec style.

### THE GREAT PALACE (So—called "Nunnery")

Of course there never was a nun at Chichén Itzá, neither a church. But the Great Palace was believed to be a nunnery when the Adelantado don Francisco de Montejo's men saw it; and it was the first time whites saw it. They were brave conquistadores clad in armour and sweating worse than in the Mayan hot baths. Truly this is the hugest building or complex at Chichén Itzá, and it is of pure Mayan style; a fact that prooves once again that which I have demonstrated in my major book: that the Feathered Serpent symbols are of Mayan origin; for here we have them and, at the same time, there is no Toltec



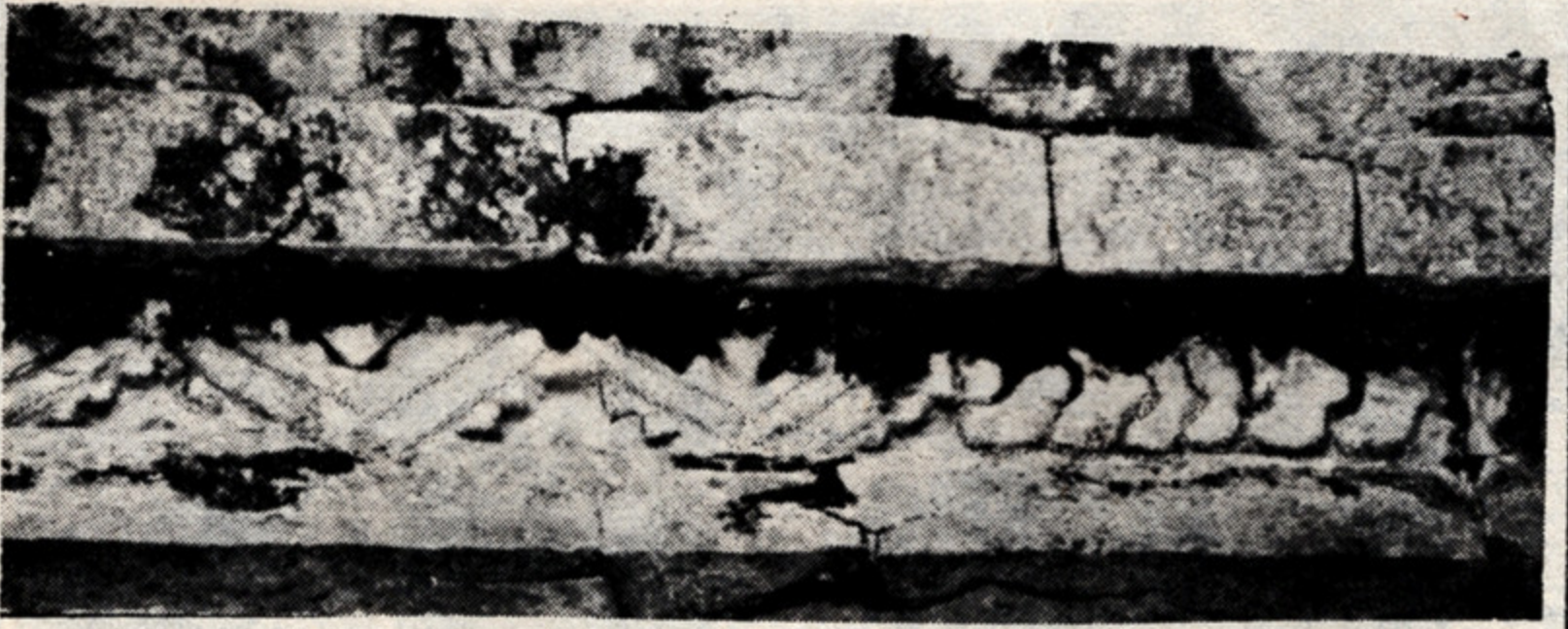


**Great Palace, called "The Nunnery" ("Las Monjas"). Completely false name.**

influence. The Palace has many rooms, corresponding to various superpositions. It is more than 70 meters or 70 yards long, and 35 in width. It is as high as 18 yards. Originally it had a roof—comb. Due to this, the wall beneath was reinforced. Mayans made a second upper structure, eliminating the roof—comb. The base was widened. As in all Yucatanian buildings the prevailing motif is the rattlesnake. The building has a sculptured stairway in which are represented animal figures. There are also flora—motifs. Doors have lintels with hieroglyphics.

The author of this guide was able to prove, due to the broken—dented—line—frieze of the palace, that this motif (called "Chimés" in archaeology, which means a sort of worm) is indeed a longitudinal—one—sided section of the rhomboidal column that the Mayan rattler has on its back. Archaeologists used to laugh and scorn when I presented this identification. When the first edition of my book "La Serpiente Emplumada, eje de culturas" was about to come out of press, I visited again Chichén Itzá and checked stone by stone, to see if nothing was wrong or missing in my data. I saw the broken—indented—line—frieze in the Palace and wondered if I would ever find an archaeologist able to understand that such a frieze meant rattlesnake. I then noticed 6 rattles at the end of the frieze. I had missed them before! They proved what I had argued during many years: that the broken—indented—line frieze meant rattlesnake. But, with a Cartesian philosophical mind I said to myself: "Well, those rattles have been reconstructed and misplaced". I then went up the Palace's stairway and took a close look at the rattles. They had never fallen! Neither had they been removed nor misplaced. They still had part of the original stucco that covered them! This proof was definite. Archaeologists, instead of admitting, dropped into a resentful silence. In the United States, a scholar named Nicholson had written and published, in "American Antiquity" that "the only support of Mr. Díaz—Bolio's theory is the belief of modern Mayas, that the rattler adds one rattle to its tail per year and that its age can be known counting them". Later, we discovered that there were 52 rattles (not "drops of blood") in the Aztec Calendar Stone and that unavoidably, each one stands for one year of the Mayan, Toltec and Aztec calendars.





*Detail of the main frieze in the Great Palace. Due to this freeze I was able to prove that the Broken—indented—line means rattlesnake. The frieze ends with 6 rattles. It is erroneously called Chimés.*

52 rattles meant the 52 years of the so-called "Century". This was a precise and clear archaeological proof. We sent it to the Director of "American Antiquity" asking that it be published as an answer to Dr. H.B. Nicholson's (of Harvard University) opinion. Dr. Raymond H. Thompson refused to publish this proof and others that I afterwards found. Simply, he disliked the rattlesnake theory as much as Mexican archaeologists did. It is something upsetting and shocking. Scholars in archaeology expected a dove, a cupid, an angel or a Venus to come out of Mayan art. When I found that instead of these, there was a terrible one which everybody abhorred, they decided that I was a liar, a prater, a deceiver. In Yucatán, the archaeologist who was in charge, in 1955, of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología's office in Merida, helped a young student of Archaeology, assisting her in attacking me in a local newspaper. Mexican archaeologists were more annoyed by the fact that a self-made archaeologist, who am I, should have made that discovery that was "so horrible", as they said. They execrated me because I happened to find that Mayan art is based on the rattlesnake. But I think that they should have execrated that art properly, not me; for I am not guilty of that origin. European mind is so distant and opposed to the snake—cult that flourished wherever there was a rattlesnake that perhaps the subject will never be comprehended. At least it is and will be rejected on account of what we may call the subconscious of a civilization, the European in this case. Having acquired the pattern of European civilization and converted to Catholicism, even the modern inhabitants of Yucatan have lost all memory of the snake—cult that was depicted in all the land. As a survivorship, we only find remains of the snake cult in the embroideries of Yucatanian dresses.

#### THE ANNEX TO THE PALACE

It is on the east side of the Great Palace. Its facade is heavy with decoration expressing nothing else but rattlesnake symbols, including Chac—Rain—God masks which are, at the same time, of solar character. This building, being so heavily decorated has not the sobriety of, for example, the temple of the 3 sculptured lintels at "Old" Chichén. It may be qualified as too baroque. It has friezes of stylized rattles, entwined snakes and broken—indented—lines just as the main part of the Great Palace. It has galleries and chambers.





**Detail of the annex temple in the Palace complex. All motives here are based on the rattlesnake's features**



**Detail of the Palace complex. To the right, the so-called "Church".**



## THE SO—CALLED “CHURCH”

It is an annex to the Palace. As such, it was thought to be a church, for the Spanish conquerors took the Palace for a nunnery. Of course, no nunnery ever existed in ancient Yucatan. The facades are heavy with decoration. The roof comb adds to this heaviness. The temple expresses itself completely in the rattlesnake motifs excepting two or three elements, such as the human figures expressing the idea of gods, or the snails which are also an attribute of the serpent cult. The lower fret—frieze symbolizes a rattlesnake line. The masks in the corners of the building have serpentine noses. They are really Sun masks, for the Sun gives heat, fire and rain. Those masks are known in archaeology as Chac's, the Rain—God. The upper frieze also represents 4 rattlesnakes. The heads of the rattlers come out from the corners. The broken—indented—line means rattlesnake. The comb on the roof has also frets and masks meaning the same thing. Fire, water, life, geometry, architecture, arts and cosmogony were expressed with the rattlesnake idea; but, only the *Crotalus durissus durissus*. This chapel is of pure Mayan style. The four human figures on the facade may perhaps mean the 4 Bacab or gods who, according Mayan religion, held the sky.



THE SO-CALLED “CHURCH”.



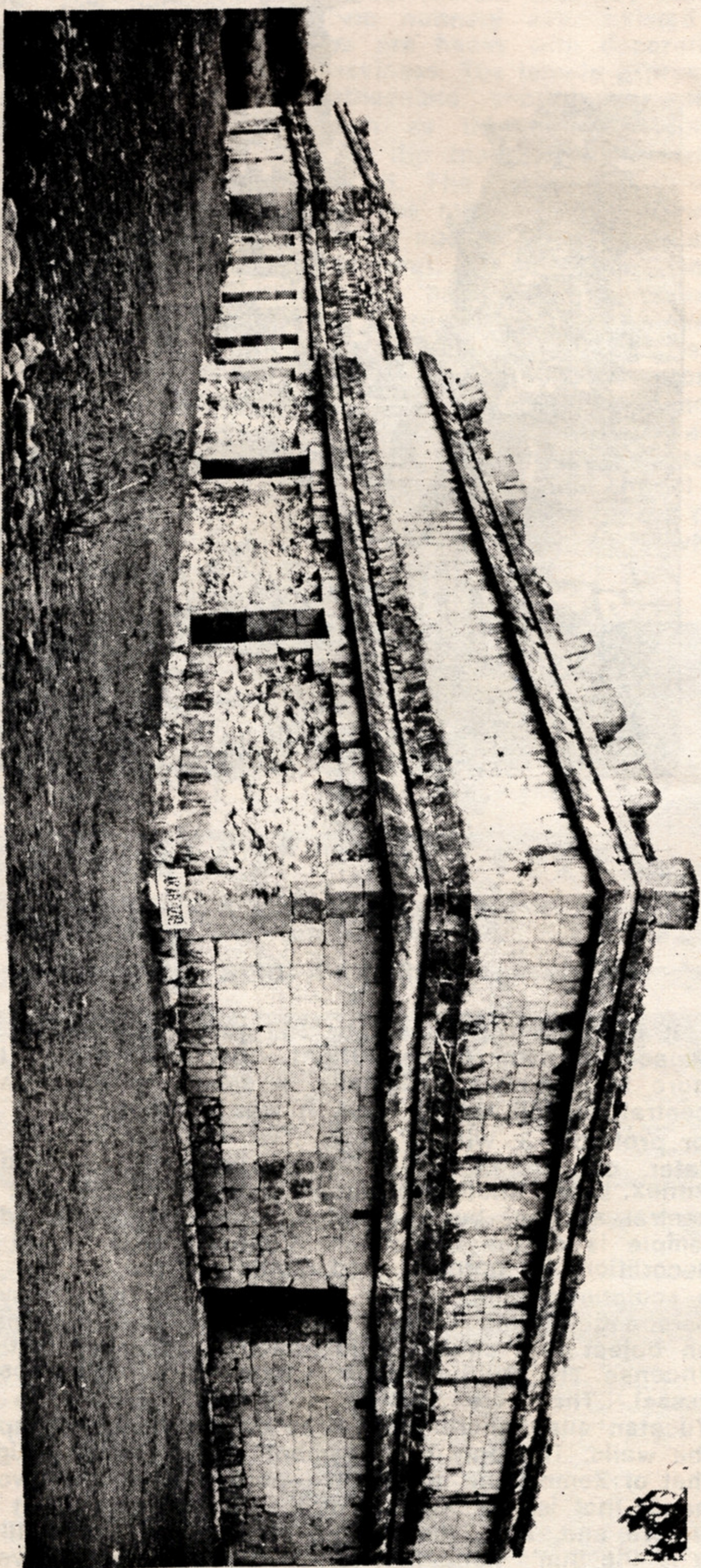


DETAIL

## THE AKAB—DZIB

It is about 140 meters or 150 yards to the east of the Palace. Its name means "Night—obscure—writing". It is of pure Mayan style. Originally, it seems to have had one central section facing west. It was composed of 2 rooms or probably 3, with 3 doors. Two structures were added later, one to each side. There were 8 rooms in each annex. Later, another structure was built to the east of the central section, but probably it was never finished. This temple is of the purest—plain Mayan style, sober in its decoration. Its cornices and mouldings are simple. It has a sculptured lintel in the door, depicting what may be a personage sitting on a throne. Facing the personage is an object that could be identified as a vessel to burn incense. The building owes its name to hieroglyphics in the vessel. They are dark, "night" writing. As in other Yucatan sites, there are traces of red hands stamped on the walls. The only hand symbol in Yucatanian religion is that of Zamná, the main hero—god who had the "working" hand; that is, the symbol of the Sun's energy that moves Nature and, also, the symbol of Creation and civilization. It is the Sun's hand that turns up the tulip and gives new life to beings and things. It is the hand that works within us, causing blood to flow and hair to grow.





THE "AKAB DZIB" — ("Nocturnal writing"). It has, inside, an interesting sculptured lintel, to which it owes its conventional name: "Akab Dzib".



## INSTRUCTIVE GUIDE TO THE RUINS OF CHICHEN ITZA by José Díaz—Bolío

### "OLD CHICHEN"

This is also a conventional name, given to that part of Chichén Itzá which shows less Toltec influence and where we see buildings of pure Mayan style. It is located South of "Hotel Mayaland" and the Chichén Itzá hacienda. Rich and interesting in archaeology, the zone is about 3 kilometers wide by one and a half miles long. Just a few sites of "Old Chichén" have been explored and reconstructed.

### THE DATE GROUP

It is better known as the "Group of Initial Series". This group has hieroglyphic date inscriptions unique in Chichén Itzá. Those dates may refer to some time around 870 A.D., according to correlations between Mayan and Christian calendars. Two Atlases of Toltec type hold a lintel with Clasic Mayan inscriptions. This is a combination of both civilizations.

### HOUSE OF PHALLUSSES

In the same complex of the "Initial Series" is the "House of Phallusses". Perhaps, these were added some time after the building was made. The male organ was a symbol of regeneration and, in our time is still venerated in India.

### THE CARYATIDES

Here are 2 high columns with human forms. But they are males, not real Caryatides.

### THE OWLS

It is completely in ruins. There are some stones still in their places, depicting owls.



*Temple of the Dates.*





*Temple of the Atlases. Strange enough in Mayan art, the male organs are uncovered.*

#### **SCULPTURED JAMBS**

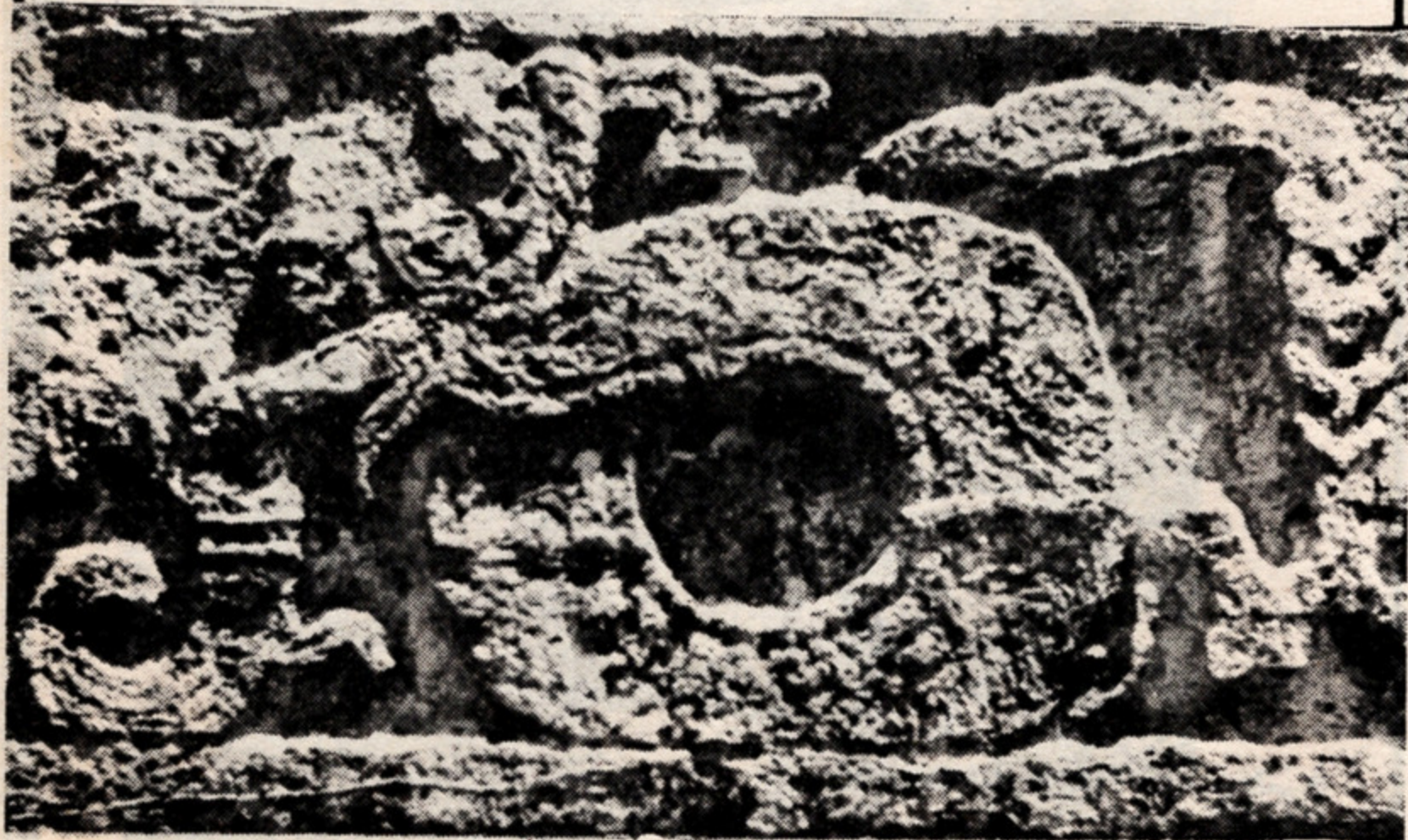
It has a sanctuary, a portico, sculptured columns and jambs. In these there are human figures in relief.

#### **GROUP OF THE BIRD CORNICE**

It is a colonnade having rattlesnake motives, birds, discs and interlaced designs meaning perhaps time—count.

#### **THE FOUR LINTEL GROUP**

According to its name; here were found 4 lintels. In one of them, the Author discovered the rattlesnake symbol and general theory of Mayan art and civilization. In another lintel we see a serpent—bird carrying the Sun on its back.



*Feathered—rattle—Snake forming a circle. It is in the 4—Lintels group. Here, the Author discovered in 1942 the meaning of the Feathered Serpent symbol.*





*In the 4—Lintel group there is another Feathered Serpent or, better, a serpent bird, carrying a solar disc on its back. Its solar—chronological character is obvious.*

#### TEMPLE OF THE TURTLE

Different in its plan, this building has three chambers and 2 porticos. Here was found a turtle made of stone. The turtle seems to have a relation with water and also with number 52, on account of its scales. On this subject we shall publish a paper.

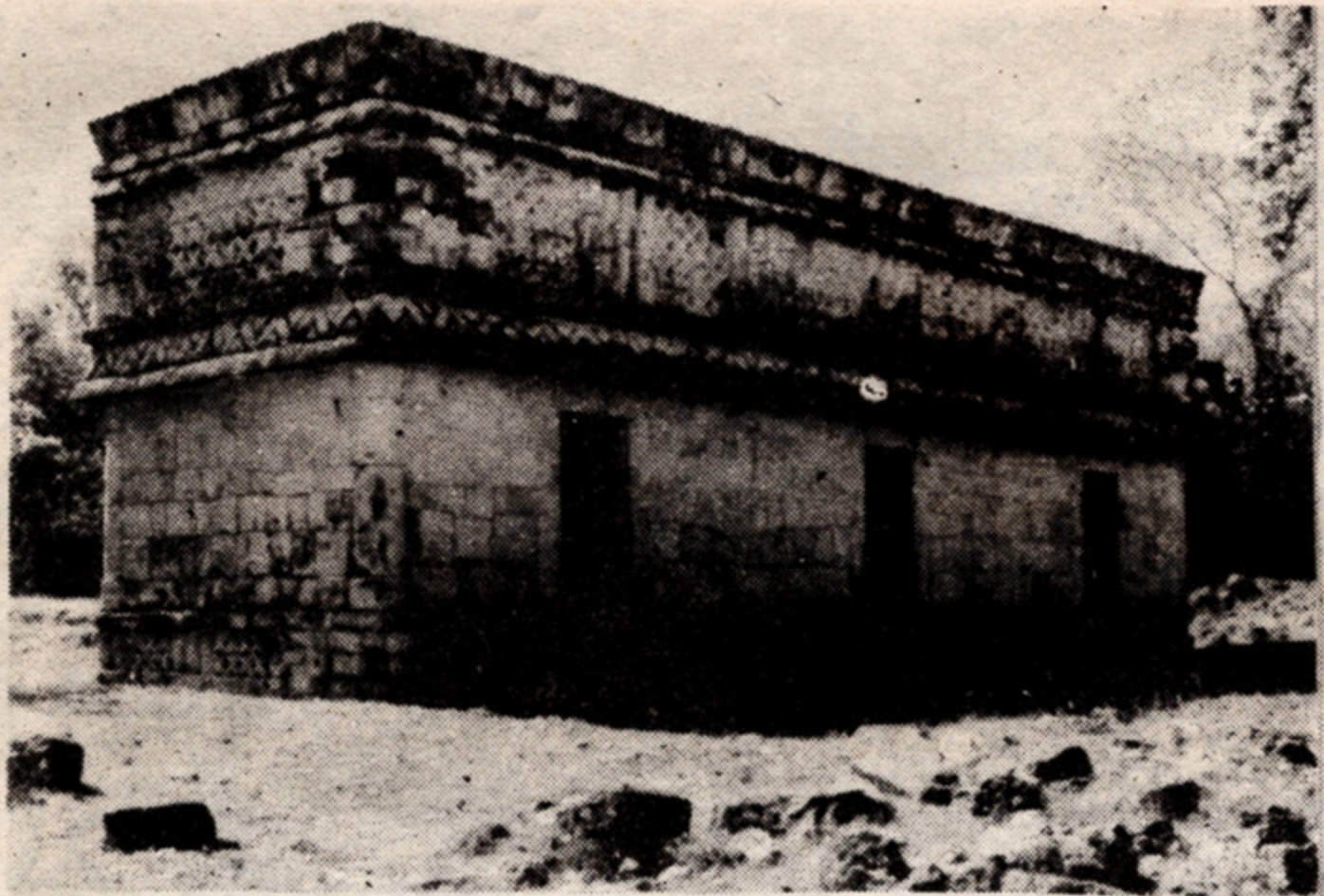
#### TEMPLE OF THE LINTEL

This structure had a sculptured lintel. It has a sanctuary and a portico.

#### TEMPLE OF THE THREE LINTELS

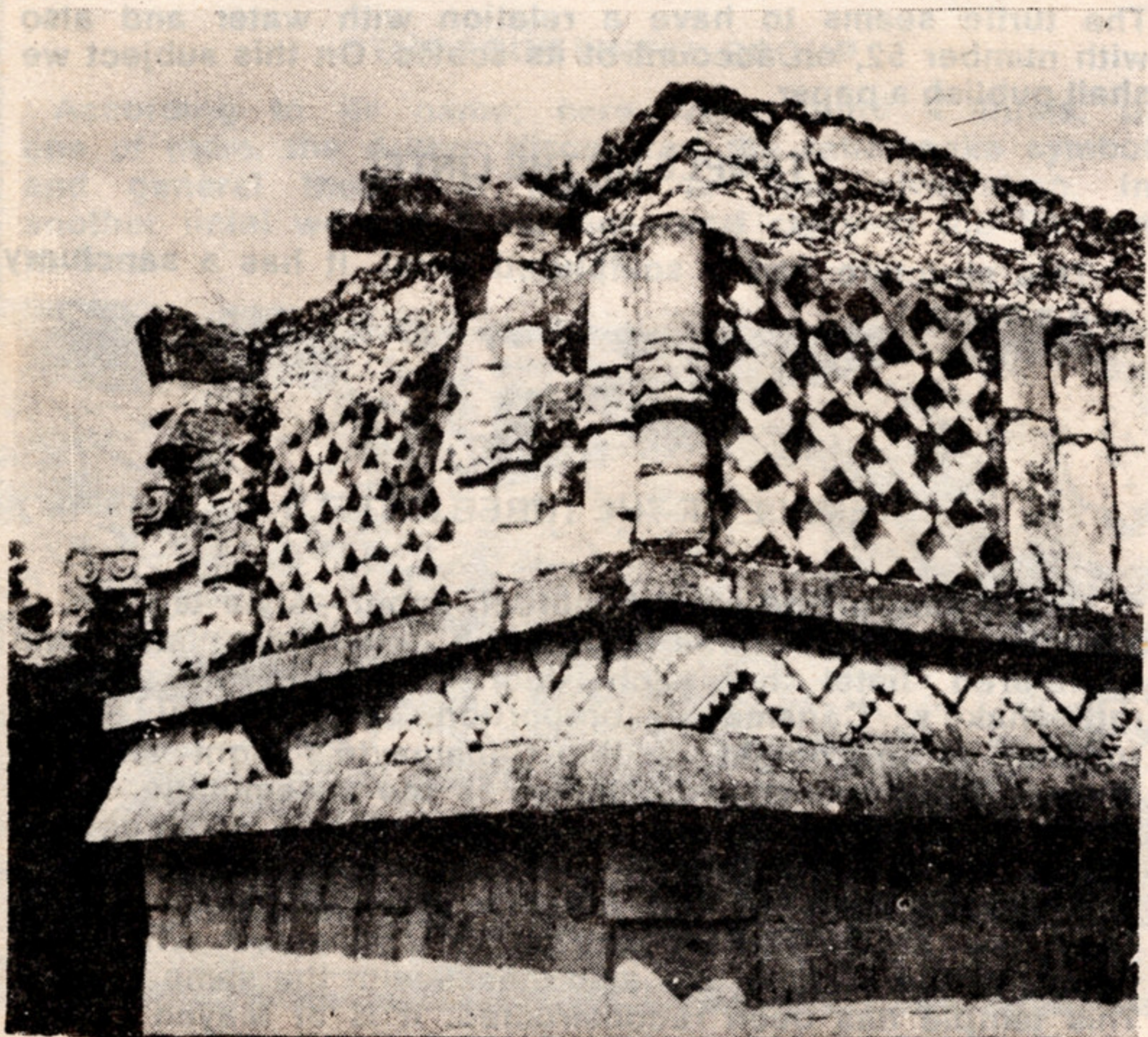
This is one of the most beautiful, sober—style temples of Yucatan. It has three doors, 3 chambers and one sculptured lintel on each door. It is in the Mayan rattlesnake's Canamayté proportion, the central frieze running at the height of the Canamayté's right and left angles. What seems to be lattice is the assemblage of the vipers squares, which are a symbol, not only of Geometry, but of Heaven. The broken—indented frieze means snakes. The great masks in the corners mean the same thing. They are solar—rattlesnake masks connected with rain. Below, in the corners, are also masks with the same symbol. This temple has been reconstructed. It is of Mayan classic style. The plain part of the facade serves as a balance to the heavy—ornamented upper part. The temple is serene and equilibrated.





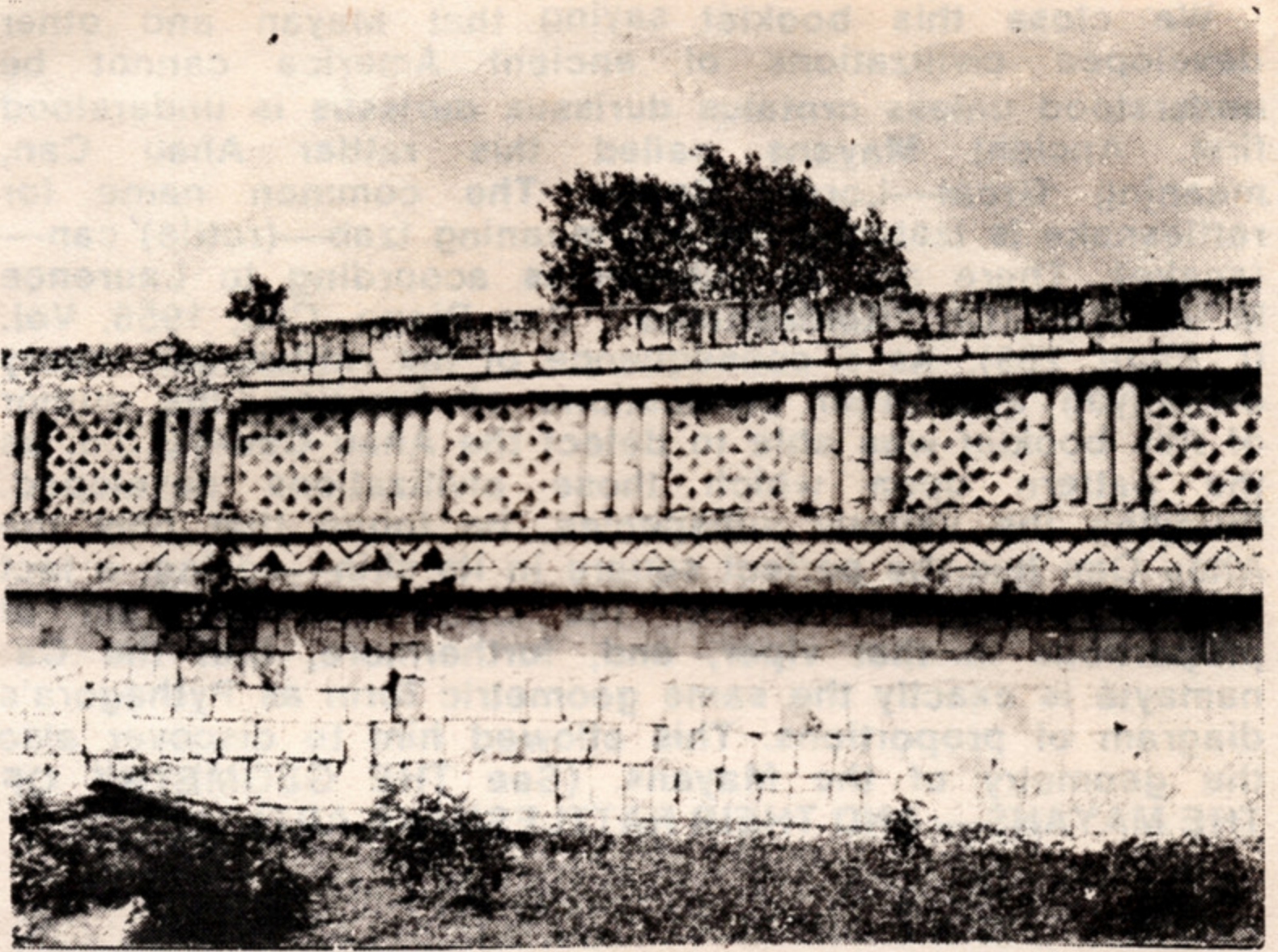
### TEMPLE OF THE THREE LINTELS.

It has 3 chambers and 3 sculptured lintels, one for each door. Style: classic Mayan, with no Toltec influence. It has 2 rattlesnake feathered masks (4 undulating feathers to each mask). Its main motif is the lattice-like motif copied from the lattice-like pattern in the skin of the Mayan rattlesnake. The central frieze is a stylization of the rattlesnake rhomboidal column divided longitudinally. On the rear of the facade there is the stepped-fret, meaning also rattlesnake. The facade has also groups of 2 and 4 columns. The elongated form of the building suggests the elongated form of the snake.



*Detail of the former.*





*Another detail of the 3 lintels temple.*



*Still another detail.*

### TEMPLE OF THE HIEROGLYPHIC JAMBS

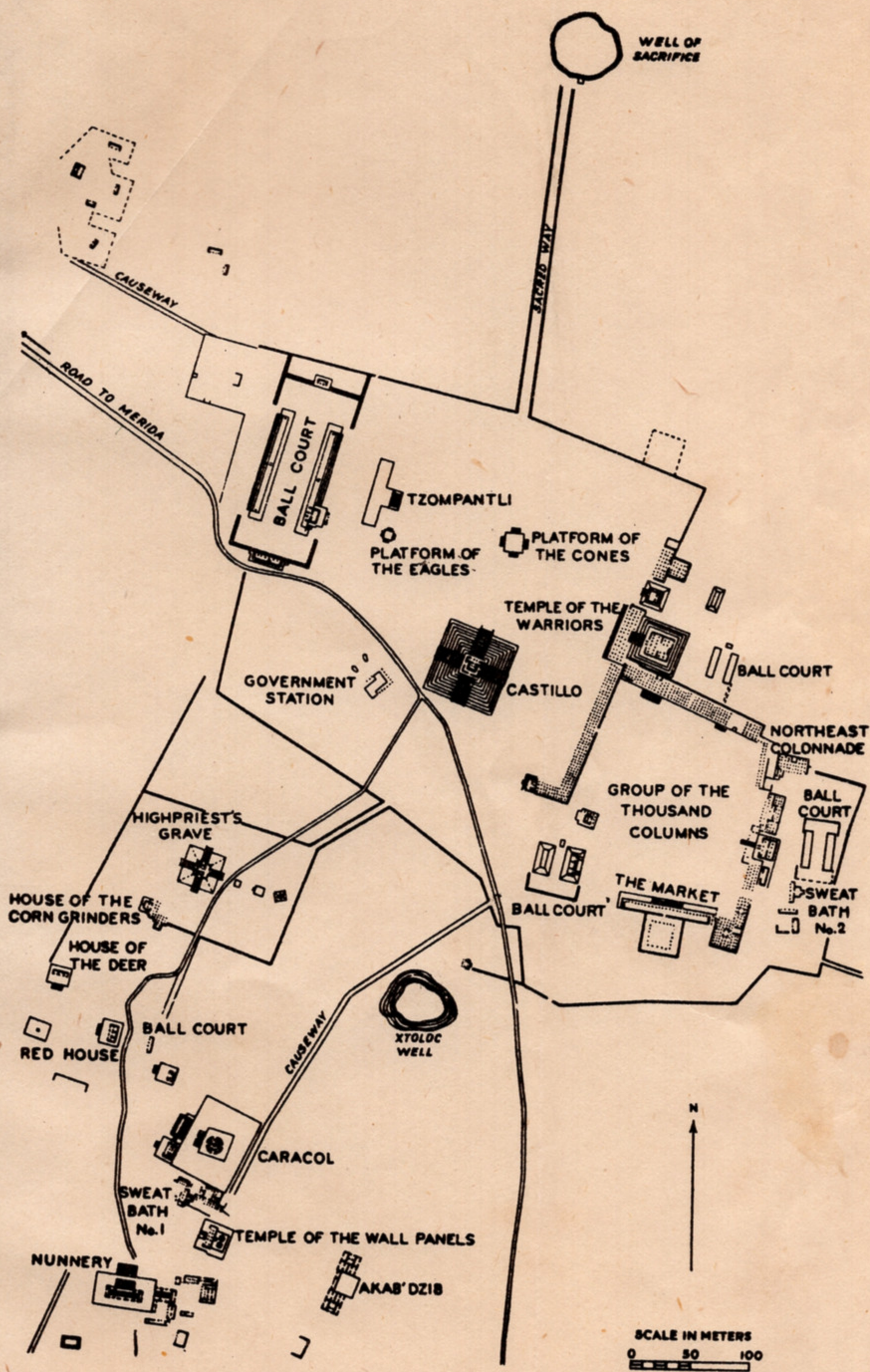
It is the last one to be seen in "Old" Chichén Itzá. It has an empty square or patio. In Mayan architecture, open—squares are images of Heaven and, of course, of the rattlesnake's Canamayté. Around the patio are columns and galleries. At the entrance are jambs with hieroglyphics.



We close this booklet saying that Mayan and other developed civilizations of ancient America cannot be understood unless *crotalus durissus durissus* is understood first. Ancient Mayans called this rattler Ahau Can, meaning Great—Lordly Snake. The common name for rattlesnake is tzabcan, literally meaning tzab—(rattle) can—(snake). There are 58 subspecies according to Laurence M. Klauber (Cf. "Rattlesnakes", San Diego, Cal., 1956, Vol. II, Page. 289). As a consequence of his rattlesnake theory of Mayan and other civilizations of America, the author of this booklet was able to detect the Ahau Can—C.d.d. as the pattern upon which those civilizations developed. Studying the various subspecies, he found that only the Ahau Can has the perfect square in its skin—desing, a fact that led him to discover the Canamayté—diagram of proportions in that viper, and, furthermore, that the Canamayté is exactly the same geometric form as Pythagora's diagram of proportions. This allowed him to discover also the geometry of the Mayans. (See THE GEOMETRY OF THE MAYANS—AND THEIR RATTLESNAKE ART)

*Ernesto Lio*  
March 10, 1975





Map of the Central Section of Chichén Itzá (after Sylvanus G. Morley's "The Ancient Maya").



essays on Sociology and Aesthetics. Being also a musician since childhood, he is the author of a Spanish-guitar method in which are given more than 400 tune positions for this instrument.

LA SERPIENTE EMPLUMADA, eje de culturas —(The Feathered Serpent-axis of cultures). Theory of Mayan civilization, based on the author's discovery that art and religious symbolism, as well as Geometry, were based on the Ahau Can Crotalus durissus durissus. Three editions in Spanish. 500 pages with more than 300 photographs and drawings.

MAYAS ANTIGUOS Y MODERNOS —(Ancient and Modern Mayans). A study on the parentage between ancient Mayans and the modern indigenous inhabitants of Yucatan.

EL AÑO NUEVO MAYA Y EL AJAU CAN CROTALUS CRO-NOLOGICO —(The Mayan New Year and the Chronological Ahau Can Rattlesnake). Parallelism between the beginning of the year and the physiology of C.d.d.

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